

حکومت من الاصل

# THE TIMES

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SUPPLEMENT

## Major to ask EU to end blockade Emergency ban on sale of at-risk cattle

By Philip Webster, Charles Bremner and Nicholas Wood

AN EMERGENCY ban on the sale of meat from cattle most at risk of "mad cow" disease was announced last night as John Major prepared to appeal to his European partners to lift the worldwide blockade on British beef as soon as possible.

Unveiling the first moves in the Government's increasingly frenzied efforts to restore public confidence in the beef industry, Douglas Hogg promised a £1.5 million a week special subsidy for renderers disposing of waste from slaughterhouses and £50 million to prop up beef prices.

The Agriculture Minister also barred the sale of meat from cattle aged over 30 months — those thought to be at greatest risk of carrying infection — until new abattoir safeguards came into operation. Whitehall officials said that it could become permanent depending on the outcome of negotiations with Brussels.

Ministers want farmers to keep such cattle on their farms and use them for dairy production where possible. Details of any compensation package will have to wait.

Other measures will include a premium of just over £100 a head for calves from dairy herds slaughtered before reaching 10 days of age and a ban from tomorrow on the manufacture of feed for farm animals using mammalian meat and bone meal. The use of bone meal in agricultural fertilisers will also be banned, but that will be delayed because the law requires consultation. The legislation should be ready for introduction in a couple of weeks.

Mr Hogg told MPs that the extra payments to farmers and renderers would reach them as quickly as possible. "The future of this essential part of British agriculture depends on a restoration of public confidence. British beef is safe and can be eaten with confidence. I believe that is an opinion that can safely be put to the British people."

The Prime Minister will tell European leaders in Turin this morning that the EU's

ban on British beef exports should go as soon as the Government has brought in a package of measures agreed with Brussels to tackle the crisis.

As the summit gets under way, Ministers will be meeting their European Commission counterparts in Brussels to discuss what compensation the Community should pay Europe for the damage to the beef industry.

A decision at leaders' level is needed for Europe to release the cash and yesterday Germany followed France in promising to make sure special funds were cleared.

"Solidarity also means money and over and above that which



Hogg: "essential to restore confidence"

the EU would be obliged to pay in any case," Karl Lamers, a powerful figure in Chancellor Helmut Kohl's parliamentary group, said. President Chirac had earlier telephoned Mr Major to express French solidarity with Britain over the problems it was facing.

Mr Major meanwhile continued to maintain that the export ban was "totally without justification" and he told MPs that he would be making that case vigorously in Turin.

Speaking after the Cabinet had spent an hour debating how to restore public confidence, he said: "It is essential that decisions of this sort are taken by member states on the basis of rational judgments, on the basis of science and not on any other basis, as I believe

them to have been taken on this particular occasion. I will most certainly be making our feelings clear tomorrow."

Mr Major again clashed with Tony Blair over the issue, ridiculing an eight-point package of proposals put forward by Labour as a piece of PR nonsense. "Labour is considering votes. We are considering the industry and the national interest."

But Mr Blair said he had never heard anything "quite so pathetic" from the Prime Minister, adding: "Would you for once stop trying to shirk responsibility and take it."

Today Mr Major will remind the other European leaders that the crisis is a problem for the rest of Europe as well as Britain and that the lifting of the export ban should be seen as part of the confidence-building package that is required.

Under the terms of the ban confirmed by the Commission on Wednesday it could be six weeks before veterinary officials reconvene to consider easing the ban. But British ministers believe that the scale of the ban, affecting such a wide range of by-products, means it should be lifted well before then.

Today's summit, called to launch the start of the inter-governmental conference on the future of the European Union, has been completely overshadowed by the beef crisis.

But British officials underlined that Mr Major's attitude towards the meeting — including his opposition to any further weakening of the veto and extra powers for the European Parliament and his tough line on the European Court of Justice — would not be affected by his desire to reach a good deal on compensation. "There is no package," a senior British official said last night.

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Helen Bamber: tribunal said Fuji bank's behaviour had been deeply insulting

## Japanese bank pays woman £81,000 for insulting her

By Joanna Bale and Emma Wilkins

A CITY bond dealer who claimed that the world's biggest bank set out to wreck her reputation and her career after she took it to an industrial tribunal was awarded compensation of £81,000 yesterday.

The figure included "off the scale" aggravated damages against the Fuji bank, which was denounced by the tribunal chairman as malevolent, spiteful and deeply insulting.

Helen Bamber, 32, who had brought a case claiming that she had been passed over for promotion and pay rises before being forced to resign after rejecting her boss's advances, welcomed the judgment as vindication of her "David and Goliath" struggle. "This is a day of shame for Fuji," she said. "I am looking forward to going back to my job in the City with head held high."

Yesterday's award included £20,000 in aggravated damages for the way the bank treated Ms Bamber after she won her case for sexual discrimination last November. Claims for unfair dismissal and unfair pay had been rejected. Ms Bamber said the bank had launched a dirty tricks campaign against her, trying to ruin her reputation in the City and wreck her chances of a career with another bank by writing to its chief executive.

Ian Lamb, chairman of the Croydon Industrial Tribunal, agreed. He said that the letter was "mischievous and was sent to intimidate and embarrass Ms Bamber. These are all factors which fall fully within the description of aggravated damages — namely malevolence, spite, malice, insolence and arrogance intended to humiliate, distress or cause pain to the applicant. It appears to us that the conduct of

the respondent is off the known scale of aggravated damages."

Last night, Ms Bamber expressed her delight at Mr Lamb's verdict and predicted that many other women would now take action against the bank. "It is an unprecedented amount of aggravated damages and I am told it is a record, apart from the recent Ministry of Defence maternity cases," she said. "The tribunal came down on Fuji like a ton of bricks. The panel were all quite mild mannered and they admitted they had never seen anything like it when Fuji were in full flow."

Ms Bamber, who said she was now happy in a new job, added: "It was a savagely fought case on their part. And it has been extremely traumatic for me, but now I have won I feel completely vindicated."

"They spent an absolute fortune on fighting this case and resorted to inventing a conspiracy theory that I was only doing this to try to extort money from them. They were desperate not to let me win because, apart from anything else, they know it will open the floodgates for other women to take action against them."

Ms Bamber spent an estimated £500,000 on fighting the case and at least one other former employee is poised to take similar action, according to a legal source. A spokeswoman for the bank said: "We are astonished at the size of the award and the legal grounds on which it was made. We await the tribunal's written decision and will consider our position at that time."

In addition to the aggravated damages, the tribunal awarded Ms Bamber £20,000 for loss of earnings while still working for Fuji, £12,000 in earnings lost since leaving

Continued on page 2, col 1

## Soldiers guilty of Cyprus killing

By Michael Theodorou and Michael Horswell

THREE British soldiers were last night found guilty of kidnapping and killing a 23-year-old Danish tour guide in Cyprus.

Delivering a 167-page judgment, Judge Takis Eliades said the three Royal Green Jackets had carried out a "decisive, planned and coordinated" attack on Louise Jensen. "Violence was used from the outset when a military spade was used to chase away her boyfriend and it was the same spade that was used to kill the victim," the court was told.

Allan Ford, 21, Justin Fowler, 28, and Geoffrey Parnell, 24, sat handcuffed in the tiny dock at Larnaca Assizes as the three judges summed up at the end of their eight-month trial. They face life sentences for manslaughter, conspiracy to rape and kidnapping.

The soldiers, who had made 100 court appearances over 19 months, looked exhausted by the time they learnt of their fate. 12½ hours after the summing-up began.

The night Louise died, page 3

## Household Cavalry ordered to learn gentle art of non-discrimination

By Michael Evans  
DEFENCE CORRESPONDENT

EVERY member of the Household Cavalry has been ordered to attend race relations classes as part of training, following a damning report on racial discrimination in the unit.

Under a plan agreed between the Ministry of Defence and the Commission for Racial Equality, the Household Cavalry will be instructed in the art of non-discrimination, including appropriate language when talking to members of ethnic minorities.

A spokesman for the CRE, which has devised the lessons, said certain words, "such as coon, wog, and nigger", were clearly offensive to people from ethnic minorities. However, "if a soldier from an Afro-Caribbean background is referred to as Leroy because his name is not known, that



"Permission to carry out a racial equality survey, sir?"

been told to open its doors to black and Asian soldiers and to record any incident of racial abuse or harassment.

Colonel Peter Rogers, commanding officer of the Household Cavalry, which consists of a combined regiment of the Life Guards and the Blues and Royals, is to issue a directive reminding all ranks of the Army's equal opportunities policy "and stressing his commitment to its objectives".

The measures followed a two-year investigation. Between 1989 and 1994 not a single black or Asian soldier was recruited into the Household Cavalry, although three from ethnic minorities have joined since 1994. Even so, ethnic minority representation in the Household Cavalry is far lower than in the Army as a whole, which averages around 15 per cent.

The CRE investigation was prompted by the case of Corporal Jacob Malcolm, whose transfer from the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers to the Household Cavalry was cancelled when it was discovered he was black.

The CRE commissioners who investigated the Household Cavalry decided there were sufficient grounds for serving a non-discrimination notice on the regiment under the 1976 Race Relations Act, a move which Herman Ouseley, chairman of the commission, said was an action of "last resort".

The cavalry was given 12 months to introduce the proper anti-discrimination measures.

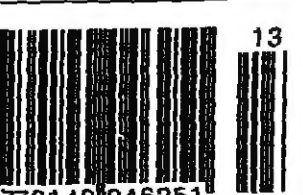
The CRE was dissuaded from issuing the notice by the MoD which said it would harm attempts to encourage ethnic minority recruits. The ministry also agreed an action plan aimed at stamping out racism in the Army and the other two services.

## Matthew Parris is top columnist

Matthew Parris, columnist and sketchwriter for The Times, was named columnist of the year at the annual British Press Awards last night. The judges praised him as a "brilliant observer of people".

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## SATURDAY IN THE TIMES



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# Birthday boy's bashing takes the cake

Today is John Major's birthday. Yesterday was his last Prime Minister's Questions before turning 53.

Other birthday boys might have been waiting to celebrate. Mr Major was packing his socks for an EU meeting in Turin, where he will be shouted at by foreigners, badgered by officials and baited by British journalists following him there to make trouble.

Other birthday boys might have been planning an evening out, a quiet night by the fire or an exotic weekend break somewhere sunny with someone nice like Norma. John Major is planning a dismal Saturday outing to meet depressed supporters at

the Tory Central Council in Harrogate, where it will rain, and where the prospective Conservative candidate is called Norman.

Other birthday boys might have been preparing yesterday by blowing up balloons, attending to the drinks cabinet or shopping for party poppers. John Major, guarded against being blown up by terrorists, spent his day attending to the dreariest kind of Cabinet, then being sniped at in the Commons by party poopers like Lamont.

Our birthday boy entered the Chamber yesterday to the sound of Angela Browning, a junior agriculture minister, telling transfixed MPs that "the whole head should be



MATTHEW PARRIS

POLITICAL SKETCH

removed" (including the bits around the neck) "but not the tongue". She had already explained how to conduct a brain test on a dead cow's cranium, putting smears of brain "on wax, then into a thin slide". She regretted this could not be accomplished in slaughterhouses.

They had been talking about slaughterhouses all afternoon. John Major and Tony Blair came in, sat down, and then everyone began shouting about slaughterhouses again. What an eve-

birthday! Mr Blair started on about slaughterhouses, Major replied on slaughterhouses, then read out an interminable Labour press release about slaughterhouses, with his comments "point by point" on its contents. Blair told Major he had "never heard anything quite so pathetic". Major told Blair it was his reply which was pathetic: backbenchers kept shouting from their seats. Betty Boothroyd lost her temper and rapped, "Members should learn to listen, not bawl out from sedentary positions" (some hope). Blair made as if to return to the fray, then slumped back in disgust: the Tory backbencher David Harris (St Ives) recommended "selective slaughter". Paddy Ashdown promised to support Major on slaughter: Norman Lamont kneeled Major in the gullies; and Eric Illsley (Lab, Barnsley Central) accused him of "total incompetence".

Did anybody remember this was the eve of a special day for our PM? Dame Jill Knight (C, Edgbaston) surely did. Famed for her apparel, the retired actress, veteran backbencher and Birmingham dame yesterday surpassed herself.

In make-up of which Cleopatra would have been proud, she wore a silk dress in crazy-paved chips and swirls of blue-green and azure, a magnificent cape in purple, sky-blue and turquoise pinned with a huge silver brooch, and more chains and bangles around her neck than a caliph's concubine.

Nine years ago Craig Brown, my predecessor-skeithwriter, observed this ample dame, running down a corridor, dressed in a colourful, large-patterned floral print. She looked, wrote Brown, "like a fist-fight in a hydrangea-bush". Yesterday she looked like a bungee jumper in a kaleidoscope.

A merry curtain-raiser to a dismal birthday.

## Russian spies target Britain in wake of Security Service cuts

By MICHAEL EVANS, DEFENCE CORRESPONDENT

RUSSIAN spying is on the increase in Britain at a time when MI5's counter-espionage resources have been cut by 50 per cent, a parliamentary report said yesterday.

Tom King, chairman of the all-party Intelligence and Security Committee, said: "They are back in business, having retrenched after the collapse of the Soviet Union, and there is disturbing evidence that Russian espionage is again on the increase."

He said it was important for MI5 to keep under review the resources it devoted to this "target". Already some resources had been "reinstated".

His warning was supported by Dame Stella Rimington, director-general of MI5, who in a new booklet on the Service said that although the level of spying had dropped since the Cold War, the Russians had renewed their efforts to post intelligence officers to London.

MI5 was unwilling to give a figure for the number of suspected Russian intelligence officers operating in Britain. There are 44 diplomats at the

Russian Embassy. Security sources said the SVR, the KGB's successor, had found it easier to operate because of more freedom of movement and improved trade with Russia since the end of the Cold War.

The Secret Intelligence Service, MI6, has reduced by about two-thirds its Russian operations, according to the Parliamentary Intelligence and Security Committee's first annual report. GCHQ, the secret communications agency in Cheltenham, has also "markedly" cut its signal intelligence effort on Russia.

There has been no let-up, however, in efforts to combat Irish terrorism. The committee said that monitoring Irish terrorist groups and their supporters had involved "just under half" of MI5's operational resources in the past couple of years.

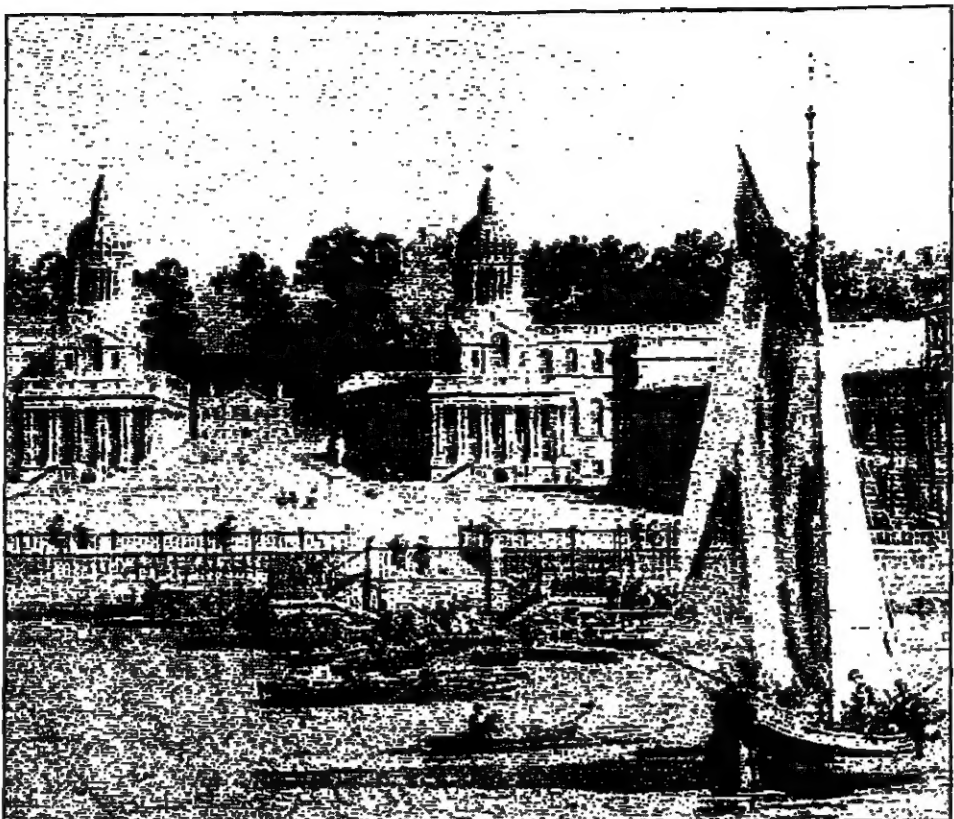
Mr King said that he and the committee had questioned members of MI5 about allegations that there had been an intelligence failure over the Canary Wharf bomb and the

sudden ending of the IRA ceasefire. Mr King said he had received assurances that MI5 had not dropped its guard.

The committee praised the co-operation it had received from the heads of the security agencies. But it was highly critical of the failure by the American intelligence services to provide a full report on the potential damage to British interests caused by Aldrich Ames, the CIA officer exposed as a long-term Russian spy.

The committee said it was not satisfied that the implications of Ames's treachery, which led to the deaths of at least nine CIA agents in Russia, were being considered with the appropriate "sense of urgency" in Britain or America.

Ministers had not been properly briefed on the implications for Britain, the report said. In a letter to the committee, however, John Major said he had reviewed the Ames case and that "on the evidence so far available, damage to United Kingdom interests was not great".



The college will house Greenwich University and the National Maritime Museum

## Greenwich naval college is saved for the nation

By NIGEL WILLIAMSON, WHITEHALL CORRESPONDENT

THE Royal Naval College at Greenwich is to be handed over to a charitable trust charged with preserving its heritage and guaranteeing public access. Lottery money could fund the setting up of the trust. The main tenants of the historic buildings designed by Sir Christopher Wren will be Greenwich University and the National Maritime Museum.

The announcement by Michael Portillo, the Defence Secretary, represents a victory for the heritage lobby after six months of uncertainty. The decision to sell the site provoked an outcry when it was announced. The Prince of Wales was among those who expressed concern.

In the wake of the objec-

tions, Mr Portillo established a panel of heritage experts to advise on the eight submitted bids. Yesterday he accepted their recommendations without reservation. "The Government is determined that the future of the Royal Naval College should be one worthy of the magnificent site and in the best interests of the nation," he said.

Those interests were best served by "an independent trust charged with preserving its architectural and historic integrity, with the proper maintenance of the buildings and with ensuring proper access".

The University of Greenwich was "the most appropriate" tenant with the National Maritime Museum enjoying

the use of certain parts, Mr Portillo said. He also suggested that the entire Greenwich area, including the college, the royal park and the old observatory, could become a United Nations world heritage site.

It is the second time this year that the Government has backed away from selling historic buildings to a commercial buyer. In January John Major intervened personally to rule out the sale of Admiralty Arch.

Details of financing remain unresolved but some continuing government commitment to the maintenance of the buildings is envisaged.

A spokesman for the Prince said he would be "pleased to hear this great news".

## Schools to gain right to be grammars

By DAVID CHARTER, EDUCATION CORRESPONDENT

LOCAL authority schools will gain the right to convert from comprehensive to grammar irrespective of the views of their council under plans to be included in an Education White Paper this summer.

Gillian Shephard, the Education and Employment Secretary, yesterday said that all parents who wanted a grammar-school place for their child should have that chance.

The White Paper, to be published in June, will propose handing much greater power over admissions to all schools. Although the 641 grant-maintained secondary schools run their own entry procedure, local authorities currently decide the method for the 3,500 schools they control.

The new powers will include increasing the proportion of pupils any school can select from 10 per cent to up to 100 per cent; the final figure will be decided by consultation. The Government is already increasing the total to 15 per cent.

Mrs Shephard said she opposed a wholesale return to the 11-plus examination but would be "perfectly happy" to see many more selective schools using the test in response to parental demand.

Her announcement put her publicly shoulder-to-shoulder with John Major and his reported desire for a grammar school in every large town. Mrs Shephard yesterday denied reports there was a rift between her and the Prime Minister and that she privately disagreed with a return to grammar schools. "Selective schools are really popular with many parents and if you really want parental choice, you need to enable access to that kind of school for parents who want that for their children," she said.

Mrs Shephard said the proposals "might well result" in a grammar school in every large town. However, a return to the 11-plus was "outmoded" because it would be imposing uniformity and the Government favoured a diversity of schools.

Labour predicted little enthusiasm for the changes among schools. Peter Kilfoyle, a Shadow Schools Minister, said: "Only 43 schools have actually asked to be able to select up to 10 per cent of their pupils. And out of 1,500 consultees, only 15 bodies, including two Tory quangos, supported increasing selection to 15 per cent."

David Hart, general secretary of the National Association of Head Teachers, said: "An expansion of selection will benefit a number of pupils but at the expense of the overwhelming majority."

## NEWS IN BRIEF

### Union to ballot on manifesto

The GMB general workers union is to ballot its 750,000 members on Labour's general election manifesto in an attempt to ensure that trade unions are not sidelined by Tony Blair. The exercise will cost at least £250,000.

The move comes after Mr Blair's decision to ballot all 365,000 party members. Many unions opposed the referendum, saying it would undermine the party conference, which will vote on the proposals weeks before the ballot is sent out.

### Killer's taunt

David Burrows, 31, a Belfast loyalist jailed for life for murdering a Roman Catholic, taunted his victim's relatives in the city's Crown Court. He cupped his hands as if holding a gun and shouted from the dock: "I shot your son - four in the back of the head." Sean Monaghan, 20, was bound and shot on waste ground.

### Condoms in class

School nurses and youth workers should give condoms to children aged 11 or 12 if they cannot dissuade them from having sex and believe that the youngsters understand the implications, a group of medical and educational organisations said. Some schools are considering installing condom machines to curb pregnancies.

### Doctors' denial

Dr Rajinder Gupta and his practice partner and wife, Prabha Gupta, of Ealing, west London, appeared before the General Medical Council's professional conduct committee. They deny placing themselves in a position inadequate to assess the condition of Lakmi Nandha, who died of breast cancer. The hearing continues.

### Haven for birds

A wildlife haven for rare birds, including merlin, peregrine falcons and short-eared owls, will be announced today by the Government. The 37,000 hectares of moorland in the Peak District will be designated a Special Protection Area under the European Birds Directive, giving legal protection to breeding and migratory species.

### Asylum denied

The son of a deported Nigerian political activist lost his challenge to the Home Office's refusal to grant him asylum. The Court of Appeal ruled that a refusal to consider a second application from Ade Onibiyi, 20, was lawful. Mr Onibiyi says that his life will be at risk in Nigeria, where his father Abdul, 54, has gone missing.

### Press awards

Apart from the award to Matthew Parris of *The Times*, other winners of the British Press Awards were National Newspaper of Year: *Daily Mail*; Scoop: *The Sun* for revealing that the Queen wanted the Prince of Wales to be bribed with their own money in the form of European compensation for bailing out the beef industry. "Isn't there, therefore, a case at the IGC tomorrow, if not leaving the British seat vacant, at least saying that there will be no progress until this ruling has been overturned?" the former Chancellor added.

Turin summit, page 13  
John Redwood, page 18

## Helen Bamber

Continued from page 1  
and £24,000 expected loss of earnings over the next four years. A further £5,000 was awarded for injury to her feelings. The bank is likely to have pay out closer to £100,000 after the tribunal ordered it should pay Ms Bamber's costs and interest.

Ms Bamber was represented at the tribunal by her boyfriend Cameron McNeill, a former Fuji colleague. Fuji had contended that she was pursuing the case to extort money from the bank at his behest, but that theory was dismissed by Mr Lamb, who

said: "For a woman working in the City to be met by the allegations that she is a mere cipher, a mere reflection of a man, is to multiply the consequences of the original discrimination. It is to rub salt into the wound. It is about the most insulting thing which can be done to a woman bringing a proceeding on the basis of sex."

Mr Lamb made no recommendation for the bank's future conduct, however, saying it would be pointless, because the tribunal did not believe there was an ounce of regret on their part.

## Lamont boycott call raises Tory tensions

By NICHOLAS WOOD AND JILL SHERMAN

NORMAN LAMONT suggested yesterday that John Major might boycott today's opening in Turin of the summit on the future of Europe until Brussels drops its ban on exports of British beef.

The former Chancellor's intervention in the Commons was seen by Tory MPs as a further sign of the tensions within the party as the Prime Minister battles to defend Britain's vision of a Europe of nations against renewed continental pressure for deeper European integration. But Kenneth Clarke, the Chancellor, kept the flag flying for the party's pro-European wing by warning that it would be a "terrible

mistake" to withdraw from preparations for a single currency. Urging British firms to prepare for the euro, Mr Clarke told a Lords committee that overseas financiers might get nervous about investing in Britain if British politicians detached themselves from the project.

Mr Lamont's hard line was echoed by John Redwood, another former Cabinet minister. Writing in *The Times*, he accused Germany of planning to use the intergovernmental conference to foist its vision of "one flag, one anthem" on the rest of Europe.

But Conservative anxieties over Europe were paralleled by stark evidence of a deep split in Labour ranks over a single currency. Some 50

Labour MPs yesterday urged Tony Blair to rule out British participation in economic and monetary union.

A new group, *A People's Europe*, from the Right and Left of the party, argued that a single currency would lead to huge levels of unemployment in Britain and allow unelected bankers to rule Europe's economies.

In a glossy leaflet called *Europe isn't Working*, the MPs argued that a single currency would result in cuts of £12 billion in services and jobs in Britain. "Stuck with mass unemployment and deflationary economics, the euro would be the breaking of Europe, not its binding," the leaflet said.

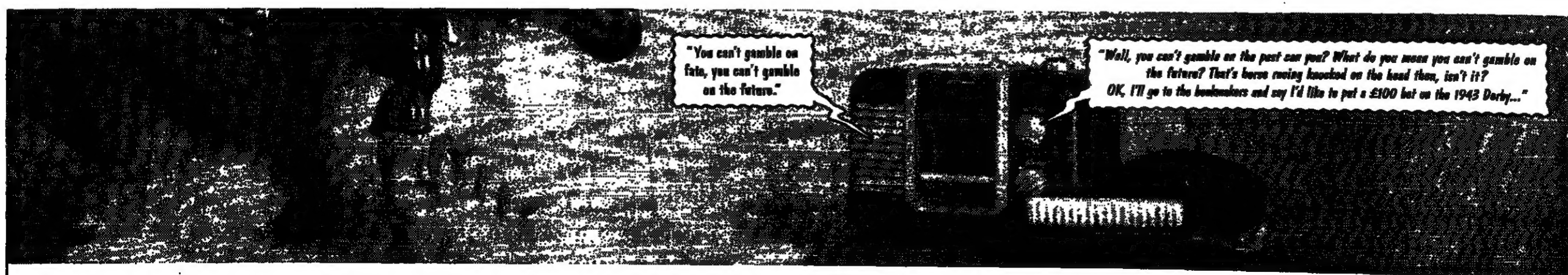
Mr Lamont, one of the most implacable opponents of the Government's

pragmatic approach to the "Maas-tricht 2" conference, seized on the BSE scare to underline sceptic distrust.

The EU ban on British beef exports was unjust and taxpayers did not want to be bribed with their own money in the form of European compensation for bailing out the beef industry.

"Isn't there, therefore, a case at the IGC tomorrow, if not leaving the British seat vacant, at least saying that there will be no progress until this ruling has been overturned?" the former Chancellor added.

Mr Major promised a vigorous defence of British interests in Turin.



## WITH A PAUL MERTON PUNCHLINE, WHO NEEDS A HEADLINE?

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مكتبة الأصل



Drunk, bored and armed with a spade, the three squaddies set out to hunt down a woman

## Soldiers brutally ended tour guide's summer of dreams

By MICHAEL THEODOULOU  
IN LARNACA AND  
MICHAEL HORNELL

LOUISE JENSEN, a Danish tour guide who had promised herself a summer in the Cyprus sunshine before starting work as an au pair in the Canary Islands, was having the time of her life when three drunken British squaddies brought it to a violent end on the night of September 12, 1994.

Miss Jensen, 23, had arrived in the Cypriot resort of Ayia Napa in January and early in the summer met Michaelis Vassiliades, who was working there as a waiter. They had been going out together for a few weeks and friends said they were very much in love and might have married.

After spending the evening of September 12 with colleagues from the tour company she set off with Mr Vassiliades, 22, a student from Nicosia, on his motorbike to visit a sick friend in Paralimni.

That same evening three soldiers were dancing in the streets of the popular two-star resort. His cheap beer and young British women looking for uncomplicated holiday romances were a magnet for the British servicemen stationed at Dhekelia.

The soldiers were soon involved in a prolonged drinking bout and became



Louise Jensen, who was about to start new job

extremely drunk. A former soldier who met them in Ayia Napa's thronged central square at about 11pm said Geoffrey Pernel, 24, was aggressive and abusive to a group of young English women, but Allan Ford, 27, and Justin Fowler, 28, were "happily drunk".

About 30 minutes after midnight Fowler's banana-yellow Mini-Moke and began the 25-mile drive back to Dhekelia base where they were stationed with the 1st Battalion, Royal Green Jackets. As they drove to a petrol station, Pernel announced he "was going to get himself a woman for the night", according to a state-

ment Fowler made later to police. Ford readily agreed it was "a good idea".

At the petrol station, they spotted Ms Jensen and her boyfriend, neither of whom they knew. Twenty yards from the station, Mr Vassiliades tried to overtake the Mini-Moke. It swerved towards the motorcyclist, causing Mr Vassiliades to lose his balance. Miss Jensen lay trapped beneath the bike. Ms Jensen, who had a strong sense of humour, was initially laughing, as she thought they were the victim of a bizarre practical joke. Her expression changed to one of horror when the Mini-Moke reversed into the motorcyclist and Pernel got out, brandishing a spade which he used to chase off Mr Vassiliades, who had hidden in some bushes.

The court was told that Ford and Fowler beat Miss Jensen before Pernel returned to help to bundle her, kicking and screaming, into the back of the vehicle.

While Fowler drove, Ford and Pernel sat on her in the back seat to subdue her as they passed through Ayia Napa and headed for a deserted spot.

They stopped at a building site in open countryside. Fowler claimed to have seen in the rear-view mirror Ford trying to have sex with Miss Jensen.

When they gave evidence, the soldiers blamed each other. Fowler told the court: "After five minutes Pernel swapped places with Ford and then I saw Pernel hit the woman with a spade. I couldn't believe this was happening. About five or ten minutes later they came back to the car. I asked them where the woman was. Pernel said, 'Don't worry, it's sorted.' Ford said, 'We buried her.'"

The soldiers were arrested by an armed policeman at a road-block yards from the British sovereign base of Dhekelia. Their clothes were spattered with blood, as was the Mini-Moke. In the rear luggage rack was a spade.



Justin Fowler, above, Geoffrey Pernel, top right, and Allan Ford were known to barmen as "the geezers"

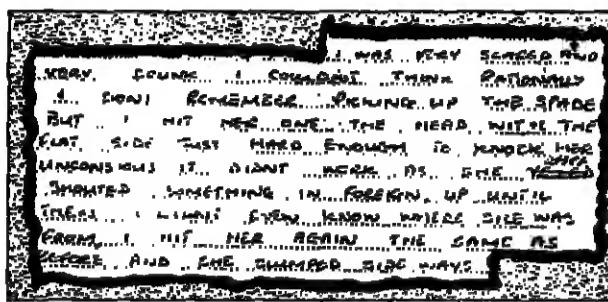
## Cypriot barmen miss fun-loving trio who were happy to help others

By MICHAEL THEODOULOU

THE three soldiers, who became friends in Northern Ireland, were known as the "geezers" to the barmen of Ayia Napa. The ornately tattooed trio were big spenders who consumed prodigious quantities of alcohol.

Like the Cypriot barmen, detectives found Allan Ford, 27, who came from a happy working-class background in Sutton Coldfield, quick-witted, humorous and likeable. "He was tough, very strong and funny," Kypros Christou, a barmen at the Jazmin pub, said. "A week before the killing, Allan was here teaching a little boy of six to play pool. He was never any trouble."

But Ford had a violent streak. He was already facing a charge of aggravated assault when Louise Jensen was killed. Kevin Remmer, a musician from Durham, needed 29 stitches in his face after Ford attacked him with a broken glass in a bar. Ford's



Part of Allan Ford's statement to police in Cyprus

estranged wife, Michelle, who left him after three months of marriage, said her childhood sweetheart had turned into an obsessively jealous husband who threatened her with violence if he should catch her with another man. She disclosed he had tattooed an arrow and the word "UP" on his penis with a needle and Indian ink.

Justin Fowler, 28, a well-built six-footer, came from a middle-class family from Constantine, Cornwall. His grandfather and father were in the Army, his brother

James was in the Royal Marines until his career was ended by a parachuting accident and his sister Jane served in the Royal Navy.

Friends described him as a "good laugh" and dependable. His fiancée, Susan, a hairdresser from Scotland, has promised to wait for him until he finishes his sentence. "He was like one of the family and would do anything for you," said the Cypriot owner of the Manhattan restaurant in Larnaca. Fowler's mother, Anne, a social worker, said the family

did not believe he was responsible for Miss Jensen's death, but spoke of his remorse. "Justin is still devastated by what happened to that poor girl. When his lawyer showed him pictures of Louise's body, he was physically sick."

Geoffrey Pernel, 24, from Oldbury, West Midlands, was also a heavy drinker who became violent when drunk. On the night of the killing he was celebrating the completion of a training course which would have led to promotion to the rank of lance corporal. Less than two hours before Miss Jensen died, he had announced he was going to "slap" a woman that night. Pernel's fiancée, Sarah Green, 22, has said she will wait for him.

Army sources said his father, John, was the only parent of the three accused to accept that his son was not entirely innocent. "If he was there, he's guilty," he said. "At least our families can visit them in prison; Louise's will never see her again."

## Islanders question need for bases

By MICHAEL THEODOULOU

THE British Army insists there is no drink problem among servicemen on the "sunshine posting" of Cyprus and that the brutal killing of Louise Jensen was an aberration.

But many Cypriots see it differently. There had been complaints that drunken and bored off-duty soldiers were performing a national disservice in the tourist resorts, above all in Ayia Napa.

It did not help that Ms Jensen was killed at a time when some Cypriots were already questioning Britain's right to the valuable swaths of real estate covered by the sovereign military bases. They were ceded to the former colonial power as a condition of the island's independence in 1960 under a treaty some argue is now outdated.

Britain still views the two bases as vital strategic interests, despite the end of the Cold War. They help to guard Britain's oil interests in the Middle East and are useful for electronic intelligence gathering, for training and as staging and supply posts.

But for most of the 4,500 service personnel in Cyprus the posting is considered a compensation for more arduous tours of duty. Boredom, however, turns many to drink.

Allan Ford, an alcoholic on a bottle of whisky a day, said: "Here, this so-called sunshine posting is really boring. You finish guard duty and there's nothing to do. There's just one shop on camp so you go to the bars and drink too much. That was the big problem." He drank even on duty, but said the Army never noticed, the court was told. "How could they know I had a problem? I was no different from all the others."

After the killing Army commanders, stung by criticism they had not done more to prevent trouble, ordered a security review. Ayia Napa was put, and remains, out of bounds to all military and civilian personnel and a lam curfew was declared on other tourist areas in deference to local feelings.



Annette and Paul Jensen, Miss Jensen's parents, leaving court in Larnaca earlier this month

## Heir to a fortune faces deportation

By RICHARD FORD

THE Home Office is expected to announce today that Jay Khadka, the former Nepalese mountain boy who is heir to a £25 million fortune, is to be deported.

The 19-year-old has lost his fight to remain in the country in spite of a recommendation from an immigration tribunal that he be allowed to stay. Two earlier tribunals rejected his appeals.

He was fighting a deportation order that was issued by the Immigration and Nationality Department because he had no residence permit and his passport when he entered Britain stated that he was 18 when he was 14.

Jay has lived for the past five years in a commune in an 18th-century castle in the Forest of Dean. He could not read or write when he was rescued from a life of poverty in Nepal by Richard Morley, a millionaire businessman, who heads the commune at Clearwell Castle, Gloucestershire.

Mr Morley, 41, has said he will leave Britain if the Home Office presses ahead with the deportation. He has said it is not a question of wealth or bureaucracy but of human relationships.

Mr Morley says he rescued Jay from poverty to honour a pact with the boy's dead

father. He has brought him up as his son since July 1990 and named him heir to his fortune. The two met after Mr Morley punctured a lung in a climbing accident in Nepal in 1984. Jay's father, Basu, a policeman, trekked for three days through the mountains to seek help.

After making a full recovery, Mr Morley traced the father to his village and promised that if anything happened to him, he would take care of Jay. After Basu's death in 1990 Mr Morley, a former naval officer who has made a fortune in computers, returned to Nepal and brought Jay to England.



Jay Khadka: tribunal said he should stay

## High drama over delayed opera

By STEPHEN FARRELL

SIR PETER HALL accused Italian opera directors of dishonesty and double-dealing last night after his new production of *Fidelio* was postponed by last-minute machinations worthy of grand operatic tradition.

Sir Peter, 65, was due to open Beethoven's opera in Rome on April 16 in a joint production between Rome Opera and the Royal Opera House. But rehearsals were delayed after the Italians suddenly raised technical objections to the British-built set on the day it was due to be loaded for shipment abroad. Sir Peter has flown back to Britain blaming in-fighting at Rome Opera, which has been hit by industrial action, for the delay.

The £250,000 set, created by John Gunter, will now sit in the Royal Opera's Cynon Valley scenery storehouse until further notice. Italian technicians claimed it was too heavy for their stage and could not be loaded in time to fit around other productions.

Sir Peter, former director of the National Theatre and the Royal Shakespeare Company, rejected the claims. "There is a war inside the opera house between the old guard and the new artistic director, Vincenzo De Vito, and I think the old guard was bent on stopping

this production. This is a move against him, not me."

"My general feelings are complete disgust at the technical department in Rome being so unprofessional and, in my view, dishonest. I would put it as strongly as that. I think there is a faction at Rome Opera that had no intention of doing *Fidelio* and held its hand until the very last minute, which gave me no leeway to solve the issues."

He said the set was a beautiful, early 19th-century design, without any difficult hydraulics or computer technology. "In my estimation, with 40 years' experience, it is not remotely difficult and it is actually under the weight they told us they required."

Rome Opera was not available for comment yesterday, but the Royal Opera House described the problem as a "regrettable blip".

Sir Peter said that the objections were "baffling" because the set design had been agreed long before. "There has been double-dealing, which is I suppose the common currency of drama. However, I do not think the whole thing would make a very good opera because the turnaround has been so barefaced and demonstrably false that no audience would be very impressed."

Opera, page 35

## Don attacks 'myths' of Ms brigade

By JOE JOSEPH

FEMINIST academics who thought they had long settled the question of women's place in society have been dragged back to the debating chamber. A London don argues that far more women prefer the role of wife and homemaker than feminists have led us to believe.

Dr Catherine Hakim had sought to explode feminist convictions that she decided were myths. She studied attitude surveys in Britain and on the Continent and decided they did not dovetail with established feminist beliefs.

Dr Hakim, a senior research fellow at the London

School of Economics and Political Science, wrote in the *British Journal of Sociology* that even after barriers against women in society and employment had been removed, many still chose the traditional role of looking after the home and raising the family, leaving men as the main breadwinners.

This month she opened her copy of the journal to find that ten academics had pooled their resources to pen a riposte to her article, which appeared last autumn. One of them, Dr Jan Pahl, Reader in Social Policy at Kent University, said: "I think the danger of Catherine Hakim's piece is that policymakers

will not take seriously women's role as workers. If that's the assumption, then you don't need maternity leave, crèches, flexible working hours, job-shares, term-only jobs, and so on."

Dr Hakim seems bemused to have provoked such a hullabaloo. Is she a feminist? "Yes, always. I don't think these days anyone questions the concept of egalitarian feminism - equal opportunities. All I'm saying is that when the barriers do come down, not all women want to pursue careers."

"One consequence is that when they do work, they choose part-time careers and their attitude is different -

they're not interested in promotion or long-term careers. It is a myth that part-time workers are all exploited. "Another myth is that childcare is the main barrier to women's employment: the main issue is women's attitudes to career."

It is on such points that Dr Pahl and her co-signatories start spitting. She says that women's move into employment, mainly part-time, "reflects both their commitment to their families and their desire to care for themselves - for a variety of reasons". Nor can she fathom Dr Hakim's point on childcare: "Most women can't afford nannies."

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Ministers determined to remove barriers of age, race and class frustrating hopes of childless couples

# Government acts to cut red tape holding back adoption

By DOMINIC KENNEDY  
SOCIAL AFFAIRS  
CORRESPONDENT

MINISTERS published a draft Bill yesterday designed to make adoption easier and more popular. Political correctness will be banished and red tape swept away in an effort to reverse the steep decline in infants available to childless couples over the past 25 years.

Women as old as 55 will be encouraged to bring up other people's babies when guidelines restricting prospective parents' eligibility on grounds of age, race and class are scrapped. Social workers chosen to interview prospective adopters should be parents themselves. Ministers say the draft Bill, *Adoption - A Service for Children*, published yesterday, will help to revive adoption but campaigners are suspicious that the Conservatives want to tackle the problems of single parents by getting them to relinquish their offspring.

"It is vital that we do not turn the clock back to a time when women were shamed into giving away their children, resulting in trauma and long-term distress," Karin Pappenheim, director of the National Council for One Parent

Families, said John Bowis, a junior health minister, said: "If adoption is seen as a positive option, it is possible that some mothers will be encouraged. There is absolutely no question of any mother - I don't care whether the mother is single or married - being pressurised by this legislation or anything we have issued into giving up her child unwillingly."

His reforms are the most sweeping changes in 20 years, an era during which the number of children, particularly babies, available for adoption has plummeted. In 1976, there were 18,000 adoptions, a fifth of them babies under one. By 1993, there were only 6,900 adoptions, of whom 465, or one in 14, were babies. Half of adoptions now involve stepfathers or stepmothers taking responsibility for their spouse's child.

Mr Bowis said: "Political correctness has no place in the adoption process. That is widely accepted among the professionals in adoption and certainly right around the House of Commons when we debated the subject."

He denounced adoption agencies

which rejected prospective parents because they were too old, the wrong colour, too rich or because they had careers: "There have been occasions when ageism has crept in," he said. "Mothers have been told they are too old at 35 despite the fact that they can give birth many years after that."

"It may certainly be that a woman of 55, an older person with knowledge for example of a particular form of disability, having brought up a family of her own and had experience, is the ideal person to entrust this child to."

Children of 12 and older will have a veto over being adopted but their natural parents will have their rights reduced. Previously the courts could force a mother to give up a child for adoption only if they could prove she was acting unreasonably. Now they need only decide if it is in the child's welfare to make her hand it over.

Social workers will be encouraged to use adoption rather than foster parents or children's homes. A struggling mother who keeps putting her children into care then taking them back when she can cope again could find the

council trying to have them adopted. Some reforms strengthen the natural mother's rights. A baby will have to be six weeks old before it can be put up for adoption and the mother will have to be counselled before handing over a child so she understands the decision and that it is hers to make.

Couples will find it easier to adopt children from South America, South East Asia and Eastern Europe under the proposals, which would alter immigration and nationality law to ensure that youngsters adopted from overseas can obtain British citizenship.

There has been a surge in demand for foreign children as abortion and the removal of stigma from single motherhood has reduced the numbers of native babies available. Four years ago, only 61 youngsters from abroad were adopted. This year the total was 155.

Herbert Laming, chief inspector of the Social Services Inspectorate, has written to all councils telling them to let couples adopt children from parts of the world where their natural parents cannot cope.

Leading article, page 19



Jim and Roma Lawrence thought they were an ideal couple for adopting a child

## Pair defeated by 'political bias'

CASE ONE: THE CHILDLESS COUPLE

By CAROL MIDGLEY

WHEN Jim and Roma Lawrence tried to adopt in 1991 they believed they were ideal candidates. Mr Lawrence, then 37, a publisher, and his wife own a large house in Cromer, Norfolk.

Mrs Lawrence had been born to an Asian family in Guyana and the couple decided on trying for a mixed-race child because there was a shortage of suitable parents.

After a series of assessments by social workers, they were told they were not suitable. Norfolk County Council social workers told them they had come over as "racially naive" because they said they had never suffered racial prejudice in Cromer.

The couple, who could not have children, have stopped trying to adopt. They almost adopted a child from Sri Lanka but had to drop their application because Sri Lanka required a report from the local authority.

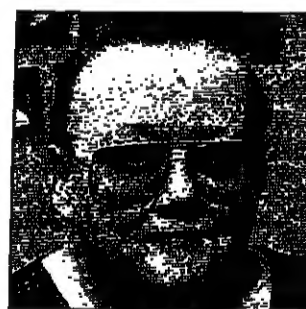
Mr Lawrence said yesterday that although he was delighted at the proposals to cut through red tape, he

feared it would be difficult to check that guidelines were followed. "At the end of the day all the adoption panel's meetings are held behind closed doors, which worries me. You can tell more about a person from spending ten minutes with them than reading untested reports, yet the adoptive parents are never at these meetings."

"Social workers will still have their own political bias, whatever the rules. Many we dealt with were almost like adolescents, they were so politically correct. I am not exaggerating when I say you had more chance of being deemed acceptable if you were working class than middle class."

He said many things they said had been misunderstood and misreported. "They asked us what kind of racial abuse we had suffered as a mixed-race couple in Cromer. Quite truthfully we said 'none' and their chairs nearly hit the floor. Later we discovered that they had reported that we had said there was 'no such thing' as racism in Cromer which is a very different thing."

'Not a day goes by that I do not think about her'



Patricia James

By CAROL MIDGLEY

IN A windowless room inside a social services office in Manchester, Patricia James picked up her seven-week-old baby girl and handed her over for adoption. A social worker left the room telling her she was showing the child to her new adoptive parents who were standing down the corridor.

"That moment, in the summer of 1960, was the last time Miss James saw her daughter. For the next 30 years she kept her existence a secret, tormented by the fact she had given her away."

Three years ago she decided to try to trace her and contacted the Searchline and Adoption Contact Register. She believes that the regulations, far from being relaxed, should be tightened. As a young single mother aged 20, she says she was never given the chance to change her mind or consider another option.

"There isn't a day that goes by that I don't think about Stephanie," she said. "Every year on her birthday - July 7 - I try to be on my own because it is so distressing. I imagine how she must look and if she knows she is adopted, she will be 36 now."

"In my mind she is married with children in a small town or a big village somewhere in the country. I think she is plump and practical and she is happy. At first I was full of hope that I would find her, but after three years without success I'm running out of hope."

Miss James, 56, became pregnant after a year-long

affair with a Greek Cypriot. She carried on working into her ninth month of pregnancy and visited her GP only three weeks before the birth. Withington Hospital in Manchester, where she had Stephanie, arranged the adoption and, soon after giving birth, she went to a mother-and-baby home.

"I kept her for seven weeks and when the time came I had to get on a bus and take her down to social services. I had spent every penny I had on a white baby dress and shawl because I wanted her to look nice. I'll never forget when I handed her over. They said they were only taking her for a minute but I never saw her again. I went back to my bedsit, not crying just numb."

She later moved to north London, where she still lives. She has a son, Stephen. "In my view it should be harder, not easier, to adopt. Stephanie was born in July and the adoption was official by November - that is very quick. I think the natural parent should have a year to decide what they want to do."

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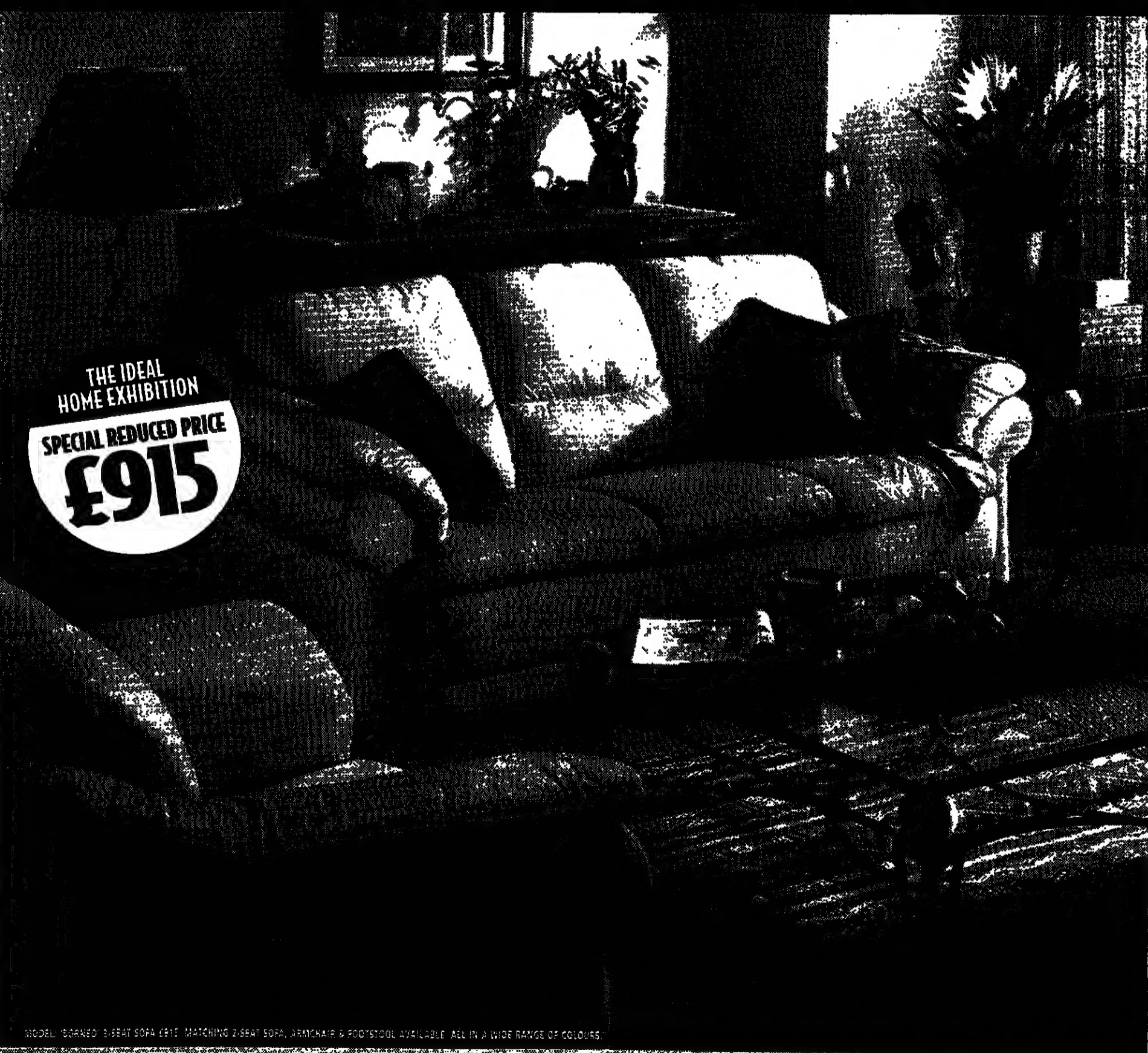
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## Victim's assault recc

By RICHARD

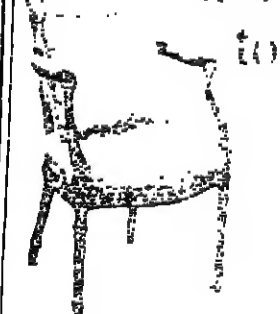
A HAIR-RENTAL company has been accused of sexually assaulting a woman after a judge in England ruled that the company's manager had forced her to have sex with him. The judge said the manager had used his position to coerce the woman into having sex with him. The woman, who is now 25, was a hair-resser at the time. The judge said the manager had used his position to coerce the woman into having sex with him. The woman, who is now 25, was a hair-resser at the time. The judge said the manager had used his position to coerce the woman into having sex with him.

## Champ loses gun

By PETER

A CHAMPION boxer has lost his gun after a judge in England ruled that the boxer's manager had forced him to have sex with her. The judge said the manager had used his position to coerce the boxer into having sex with her. The boxer, who is now 25, was a champion boxer at the time. The judge said the manager had used his position to coerce the boxer into having sex with her.

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# Victim of police assault awarded record £220,000

By RICHARD FORD

A HAIRDRESSER won £220,000 damages yesterday after a jury found that he was assaulted by police and wrongfully arrested. The award, a record against police in England and Wales, came after counsel for Kenneth Hsu urged the jury to send a clear message that the public would no longer stand for "lying, bullying, racism and perjury" by the Metropolitan Police.

Central London County Court was told that police went to Mr Hsu's home in Tulse Hill, south London, over a dispute involving a tenant in July 1992. He was arrested after refusing to allow officers in without a warrant. His solicitor, Sid Khan, said his client had been grabbed by the arms which were twisted up his back and then handcuffed behind him.

Mr Khan said: "They punched and kicked him in the van and he was kicked in the kidneys. Another policeman used his back as a footstool and the driver turned round and insulted him verbally saying he had got no more than he deserved. The charge officer told him, 'I've never arrested a Chink before.' When he was released at 11pm that night they threw him into the street in just jeans



Hsu: doctors found he had extensive bruising

and flip-flops. He had to walk two miles home."

Mr Khan said that when Mr Hsu arrived the front door was open and his stereo and other property had been stolen. Doctors at King's College Hospital found that he had extensive bruising to his back and kidneys and was passing blood.

Mr Hsu made a formal complaint to the Police Complaints Authority. Despite a police surgeon confirming the injuries, the complaint was rejected and he decided to sue.

Ben Emmerson, counsel for Mr Hsu, urged the jury to send a strong message to Sir

Paul Condon by awarding damages which would hit his annual budget. "In this case a small award of damages would be regarded as a victory by the officers. Even a moderately large award would be greeted with relief at Sireatham police station."

A statement issued on behalf of Sir Paul Condon, the Metropolitan Police Commissioner, said: "We believe the award in this case to be excessive and we are to appeal against the size of the award but not the verdict."

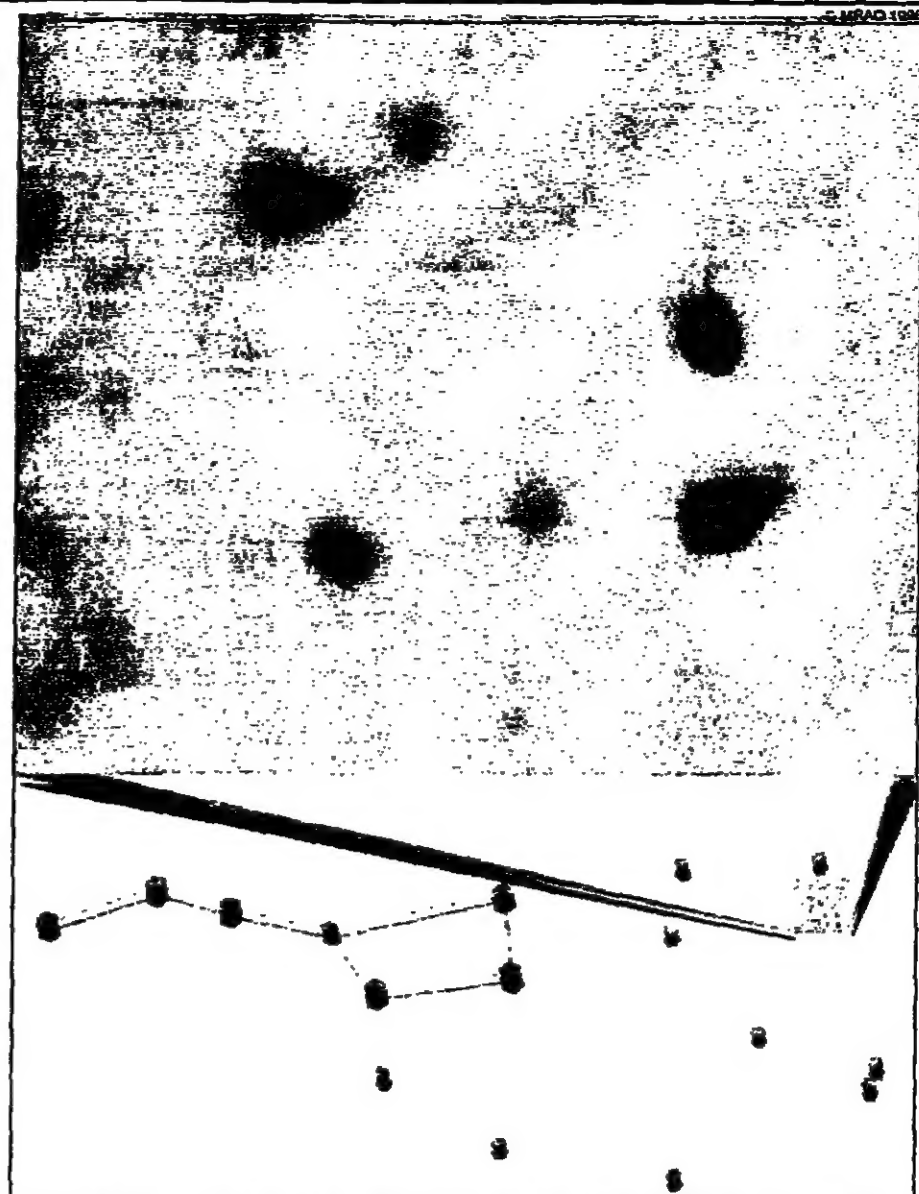
Mr Hsu, 32, said after the case: "Finally I've got justice. I'm really happy with what the jury have done. I feel terribly relieved. I still don't understand why the police did what they did."

The Metropolitan Police said no action had been or would be taken against the officers. The constables involved, Kenneth Watkins, Christopher Smith, Andrew Morris and Andrew Davies, were continuing with their normal duties.

In a separate case at the same court, a jury awarded £64,000 damages to Terence Winyard, 27, who accused other police officers from the same station, Streatham, of wrongful arrest and assault, false imprisonment and malicious prosecution.

# Cambridge team pictures dawn of the universe

By NIGEL HAWKES, SCIENCE EDITOR



The image of "cosmic ripples" seen from the Cambridge telescope, top, and the area of sky that was observed in relation to the Plough constellation

PHYSICISTS at Cambridge have taken the clearest pictures yet of the universe before the stars and galaxies began to form.

The image shows tiny variations in the radiation that permeates the universe and is believed to be the final echo of the Big Bang. From these small variations the galaxies and stars later formed.

The images show the universe as it was 300,000 years after the Big Bang, less than one 50,000th of its present age. They have been taken with a prototype telescope costing £250,000.

Now the Particle Physics and Astronomy Research Council has agreed to spend £2.6 million to build a bigger version on Tenerife. This instrument should be able to distinguish between the rival theories of the origins of the ripples and predict the future of the universe, says Dr Paul Scott, one of the research team.

Three years ago a satellite launched by the US space agency Nasa took the first pictures showing variations in background radiation. Cosmologists believed that these "cosmic ripples" must exist to account for the fact that matter in the universe is not evenly dispersed but

coalesced into stars, planets and galaxies. But those pictures showed only faint ripples, which were at least partly caused by noise. The Cambridge images, though they cover only a tiny area of sky, are much sharper. They were taken with a telescope called CAT (Cosmic Anisotropy Telescope) by studying radiation at wavelengths of about two centimetres.

CAT combines signals from three horns, about two metres apart, pointing at the same area of sky. By using lengthy exposures, it is possible to remove the large amounts of radiation emitted by the atmosphere, leaving only cosmic background radiation.

CAT is sensitive to variations of only one 100,000th of a degree centigrade between the hotter and colder regions of the sky. A large metal shield protects the horns from ground heat. The features seen in the images do not correspond to any celestial objects. "We are seeing the universe at a time before stars and galaxies formed," Dr Scott said. "These clumps may have formed solid objects later, but if so they would lie at the very edge of the universe and light from them could not have reached us yet."

# Champion shot loses gun licences

By PAUL WILKINSON

A CHAMPION marksman was told yesterday that he cannot keep his arsenal of firearms because he may be a public danger. Andrew Judge, a former member of the British clay pigeon shooting team, had twice been involved in "road rage" incidents, had allegedly made death threats to relatives and had attacked a policeman, York Crown Court was told.

The court rejected his appeal against a police decision to withdraw his licences for a Magnum bolt-action rifle, three 12-bore double-barrel shotguns and a fourth shotgun. Mr Judge, 45, had wanted the licences to enable him to set up a shooting and dog training centre at his 12-acre country house at Great Barugh, North Yorkshire.

Stephen Twist, for North Yorkshire Police, which confiscated the weapons after revoking Mr Judge's licences three months ago, said he was unsuitable to hold them because he was unable to

control his temper. Mr Twist said that in 1974 Mr Judge was fined £15 after body-checking a policeman. In 1991 a motorist was kicked unconscious during a fight but he declined to pursue legal action. In 1994 Mr Judge was given a two-year conditional discharge after he ripped off a wing mirror and pushed it at a driver who had abused him.

Last year Mr Judge, Yorkshire Clay Pigeon Champion in 1984, allegedly telephoned his father-in-law and brother-in-law threatening to shoot them in the back after he lost his job at the family firm. Police took no action.

Scott Wilson, for Mr Judge, said the lack of police action bore out his denial of his relatives' allegations. "There is no likelihood of offences being committed involving the use of shotguns," Mr Wilson said.

But Judge Savill, QC, said: "All the circumstances show he is a man of intemperate habits and is unfit to hold a firearms and shotgun certificate without there being a danger to the public peace."

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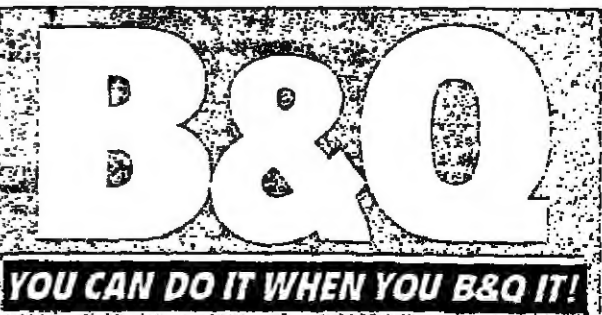


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*However, our customers' lack of confidence in British beef, the related potential damage to our business and threat to our employees' livelihood has caused us to take the decision to source beef outside the UK until confidence in British beef is fully restored."*

**From Saturday 30th March, and until further notice, all beefburgers served in Burger King restaurants will be made with non-British beef.**

**You will still be able to enjoy the BK Chicken Flamer<sup>®</sup>, Chicken Royale, Spicy Beanburger and all other items on our menu. Naturally, should circumstances change in any way, we will keep you informed through the press and our restaurants.**





## Railtrack buy-back scheme under fire

By Jonathan Prynn and Jill Sherman

LABOUR is expected to face criticism from the Government and left-wing backbenchers today as Clare Short unveils the party's policy for returning Railtrack to public ownership.

The proposals are expected to commit Labour to renationalising Railtrack but are unlikely to detail how or when. Gordon Brown, the Shadow Chancellor, has strongly objected to more radical plans, drawn up by John Prescott and Brian Wilson, Labour's rail spokesman, on the ground of cost.

The likely wording of the proposals, due to be announced by Ms Short at a conference in Swindon this afternoon, will emphasise the importance of restoring Railtrack to public ownership "as resources allow".

Many ideas on how this would be achieved have been considered by the party leadership but all have been found to have legal or practical flaws or have drawn strong objections from one or other senior party figures.

The option that has achieved most widespread agreement and is likely to be announced today involves a transfer of the £2 billion rail subsidy from train operators to Railtrack, giving a Labour government far greater control. In the meantime, Railtrack shares would be gradually bought in the market, to provide a controlling stake over time.

Advisers to Sir George Young, the Transport Secretary, said that he was eager to attack the proposals after enduring a year of Labour criticism over rail privatisation. Several Labour MPs are already condemning what they see as an impractical fudge. One said: "Switching subsidies is about control not about ownership."

British Rail, which employed nearly three quarters of a million people at its peak in the 1950s and still has a payroll of 80,000, is to be reduced to a rump of 60 staff by autumn of next year. The board will be slimmed down to a chairman serving part-time and three non-executive directors.

## Labour will be vulnerable to attacks on policy

# Voters are lured by Blair and image of moderation

By Peter Riddell

LABOUR'S high poll ratings reflect strong approval for Tony Blair and the party's moderate image rather than enthusiasm for the rest of the leadership team and its policies.

The latest MORI poll for *The Times*, undertaken last weekend, shows how far Labour has improved its image compared with the Tories over the past few years, but it also shows where the party remains vulnerable.

In September 1991, six months before the last general election, the Tories had a more favourable rating than Labour on ten out of 14 measures of image. The Tories were rated more favourably for moderation and being professional in their approach. They were then less likely than Labour to be seen as divided. The exceptions where Labour was ahead were the measures on representing all classes and on being in touch with ordinary people. But now Labour is more favourably regarded than the Tories on all but one of the 14 measures. The exception is the ambiguous measure of being too dominated by its leader, though the difference here is small.

The most striking changes

since autumn 1991 are measures such as being divided, understanding the problems facing Britain, having sensible policies and having a good team of leaders. The internal Tory arguments of the past few years have taken a big toll. The proportion regarding the Tories as divided has jumped from 14 to 48 per cent since 1991, while the number viewing Labour as divided has declined from 29 to 17 per cent. Moreover, there are no signs of any improvement in the Tories' image compared with when the same questions



Blair: strong appeal to new supporters

were last asked in October 1995. MORI has analysed the figures to look at the views of those who have switched to support Labour since the 1992 general election. These are the voters who will decide the next election, depending on how many remain with Labour as opposed to switching again to the Tories or the Liberal Democrats.

These switchers are satisfied with the way Mr Blair is doing his job as Labour leader by a 75 to 14 per cent margin, slightly higher than among Labour supporters as a whole, including long-term loyalists. Moreover, 26 per cent of these new Labour switchers regard the party as moderate, compared with 19 per cent of Labour supporters as a whole.

By contrast, these switchers are less convinced than Labour supporters generally that the party has sensible policies (35 to 44 per cent), a good team of leaders (27 to 35 per cent) or will promise anything to win votes (20 to 14 per cent). This suggests that these switchers are motivated more by Labour's non-threatening image — Mr Blair's approach as leader and the belief that it is

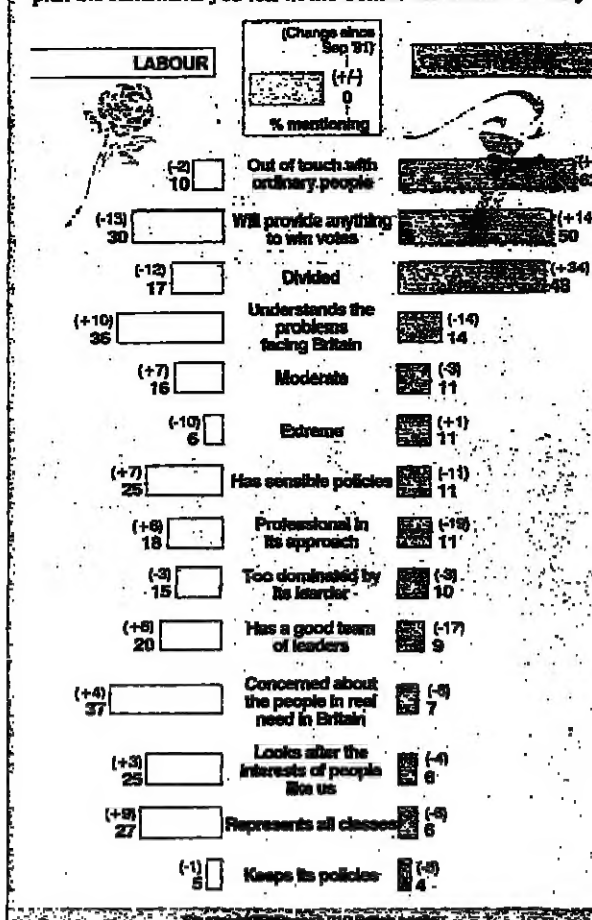
moderate — than by enthusiasm about its policies or its general leadership team. This shows where Labour might be vulnerable to Tory attacks during the long pre-election campaign.

The poll also suggests that the image of the Liberal Democrats has changed little since 1991 except that the number regarding the party as divided has halved to 5 per cent. In 1991, the Liberal Democrats were still suffering from the arguments over the merger in 1987-89. Among other features of the latest poll is that the previous gender gap of support for the parties has, at least temporarily, been reversed. Since the end of February, support for the Tories among men has risen from 22 to 29 per cent, and has dropped among women from 29 to 27 per cent. There is no obvious explanation for such a switch in just a month, though the beef row could have had some effect. It will only become clear in a month or two whether this is the start of a sustained trend.

The MORI economic optimism index — measuring those who think that the general economic condition of

### CHANGING PARTIES, CHANGING IMAGE

Here is a list of things both favourable and unfavourable that have been said about various political parties. Please pick the statements you feel fit the Conservative/Labour Party



the country will improve rather than get worse over the next 12 months — has hardly changed over the past month at minus 17 points.

MORI interviewed a representative quota sample of

1,910 adults at 143 word sampling points between March 22 and 25. Voting intention figures exclude those who say they would not vote (9 per cent), are undecided (9 per cent) or refuse to name a party (3 per cent).

## Tories offered little to encourage early election

Don't bet on an early general election. Of course, the Government may be forced into calling one this autumn merely to avoid losing the political initiative over the winter. Its one-vote majority on Wednesday after a Labour ambush on a VAT amendment to the Finance Bill could be a pointer to cliffhangers ahead, especially if the Tories lose more MPs in by-elections or defections. Some economists believe that the autumn could be the most favourable time in terms of living standards and interest rates, especially if Kenneth Clarke has little room for manoeuvre to cut taxes in November. The odds on October or early November, ahead of the Budget, may have shortened recently, but this is still a fall-back contingency rather than a preferred option.

The predominant Labour view is

### RIDDELL ON POLITICS

that the Government will somehow survive, or perhaps stumble, into the New Year, relying on one or other Unionist faction in close votes, as happened over the Scott report. This outlook could change in late January or February if the Unionists decide they would benefit from bringing down a lame-duck administration. Until then, Labour leaders believe that the Tories should be reasonably safe in the Commons.

That was the conclusion drawn by one of the shrewdest Commons observers when he heard about Tony Blair's plan to ballot Labour's 365,000 individual members this autumn on an early version of the party manifesto. He was partly right. The plan is intended to give

the party a new sense of direction after a loss of momentum over the past two months. The production of policy papers, the early manifesto, the subsequent consultations, the party conference debate and the ballot will take until the second half of November at least — and then we will be into the Budget and the early stages of campaigning.

The need for such a ballot to bind in Labour MPs as well as local activists, to the party's programme was underlined yesterday by the rumblings of dissent by 50 hard-left and sceptical MPs against a single European currency. They are by no means as influential as the Tory sceptics, but their statement was a warning signal of probable troubles in office. The existence of these dissenters is also why Mr Blair is leaving the door open to the Liberal Democrats and — who knows? — to

informal support from the ramp of Tory pro-Europeans after the election.

There is, however, an escape route in Labour's plans. The membership ballot would obviously have to be abandoned if there is an October election, but the document itself — the manifesto minus tax details — will be produced by June and therefore ready for the autumn.

There is little in the latest MORI poll to encourage the Tories to go for an early election. The voting intention figures are being buffeted around each month by events like the Harman row, the Scott report and, now, beef. There appears to have been a gradual pick-up in Tory support since last summer, as indicated both by the polls and the party's successes in local council by-elections. So the worst is probably over, and local morale is no

longer deteriorating. But satisfaction with the performance of the Government as a whole of John Major as Prime Minister remains low, and the party is suffering from its divided image.

Labour and Mr Blair are still riding high. But as the accompanying report suggests, Labour's success is more because of its non-threatening image and Mr Blair's appeal than because there is great enthusiasm for its policies or its leadership team. The Tories may get some mileage out of attacking the poor quality of some members of the Shadow Cabinet and policy doubts. But far more important is the, probably vain, hope that the Tories will appear less discredited and look more competent as a Government.

PETER RIDDELL

## Motorway toll trials at risk of collapse

Jonathan Prynn  
Transport Correspondent

PLANS to charge drivers for using the motorways are close to collapsing after the withdrawal of four of the eight companies selected to test electronic tolling equipment on the M3.

Sir George Young, the Transport Secretary, is planning to postpone indefinitely the £20 million trials on a stretch of the motorway near Basingstoke, according to today's edition of *The Economist* magazine. The equipment on trial is designed to charge cars and lorries automatically as they drive past roadside sensors. Smaller scale off-road tests at the Transport Research Laboratory will still go ahead.

The move is a severe setback for the Government's transport policy as Sir George is determined to make motorway users pay more to help to offset the cost of pollution and treatment of crash victims.

Officials are now dusting down previously rejected methods for imposing the tolls. The most likely is seen as a Swiss-style annual motorway permit that would have to be displayed in car windshields. However, this is seen as unfair on drivers who use motorways only a few times a year. Toll plazas as used on the Continent have been ruled out because they would require building over huge swaths of protected land.

The fatal blow for the motorway trials came last week when Tollstar, a mainly British consortium regarded as one of the favourites to run the tolling system, said it was likely to pull out. Three groups, Siemens, Tollway and Autolink, had already withdrawn.

That left only four of the original eight trialists, all but one of which deploy similar forms of technology. At least one is also believed to be reconsidering its part in the trials, for which the bidders have to pay.

A senior Tollstar source said: "We were being asked to spend £1-£2 million on the off-chance of an order coming in about 2004. Unless they can find a way of significantly reducing the costs it just does not make sense."

## Direct lifeline is thrown to savers

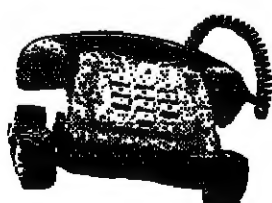
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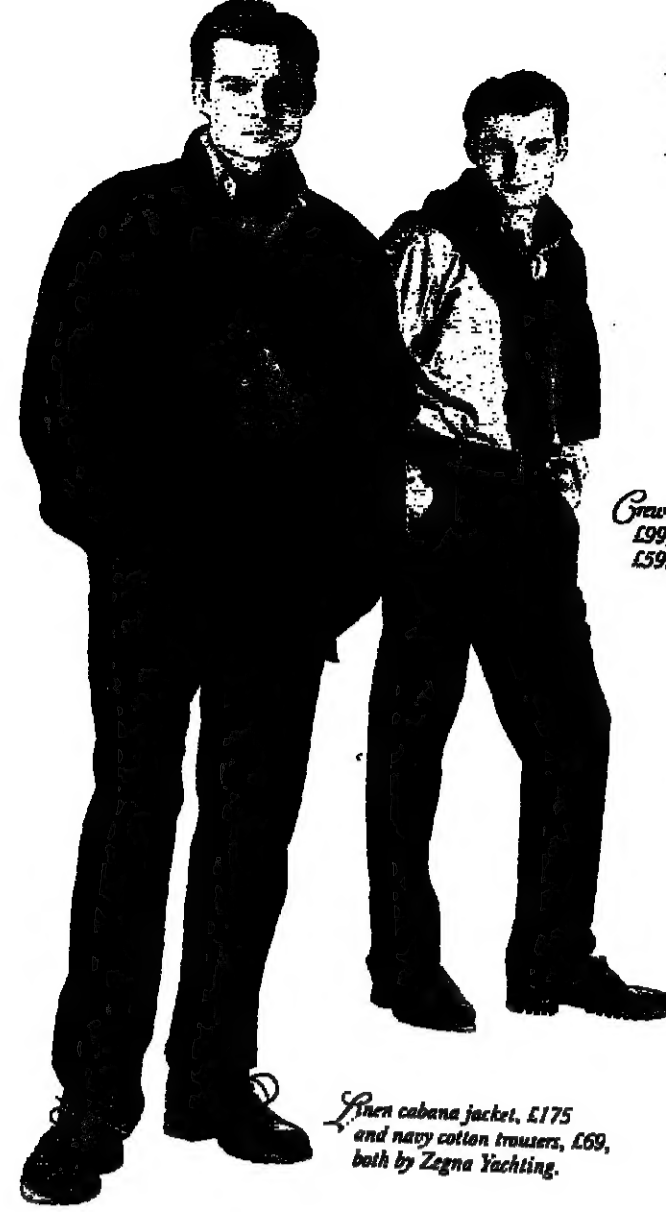
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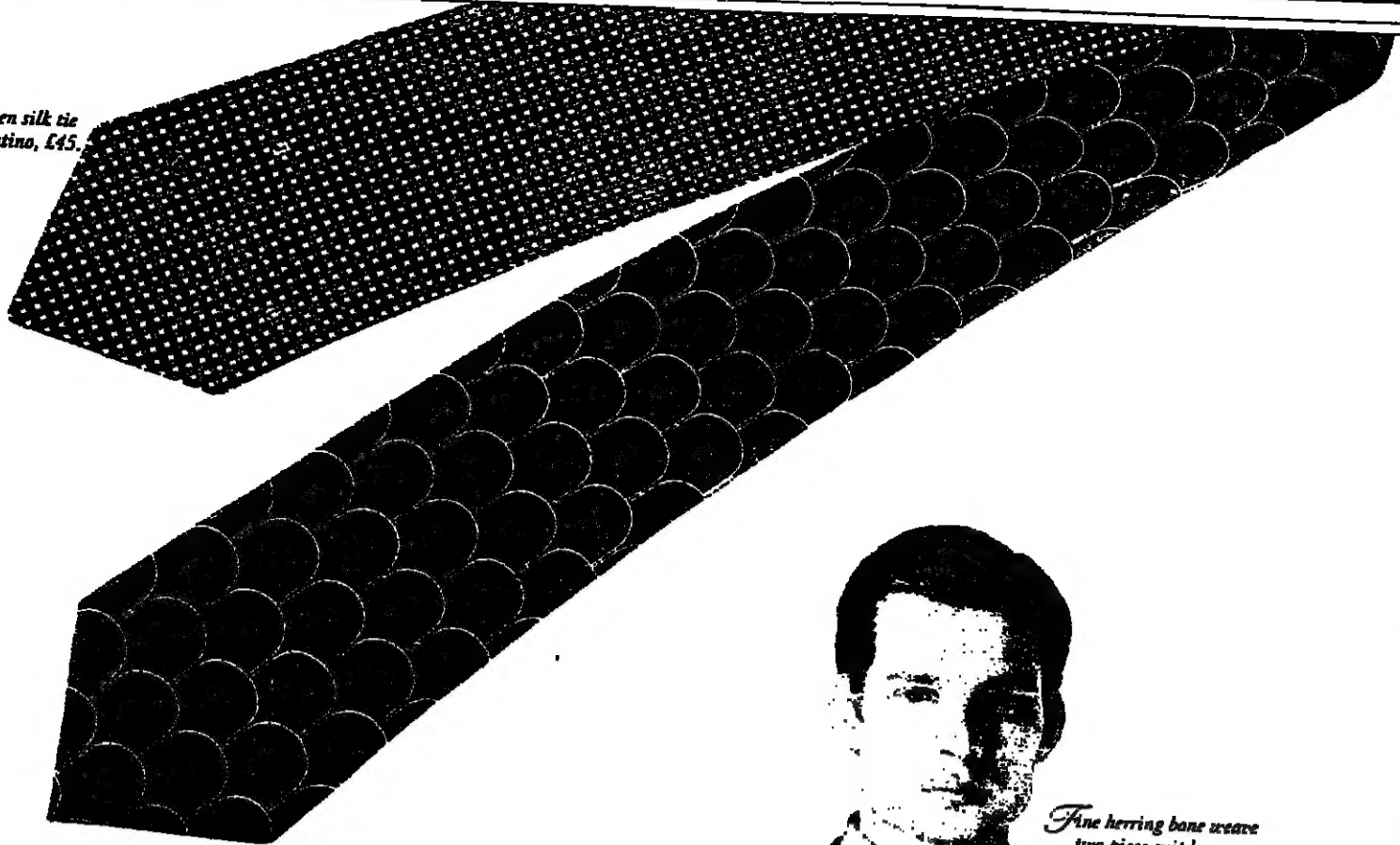


Motorway toll trials at risk of collapse

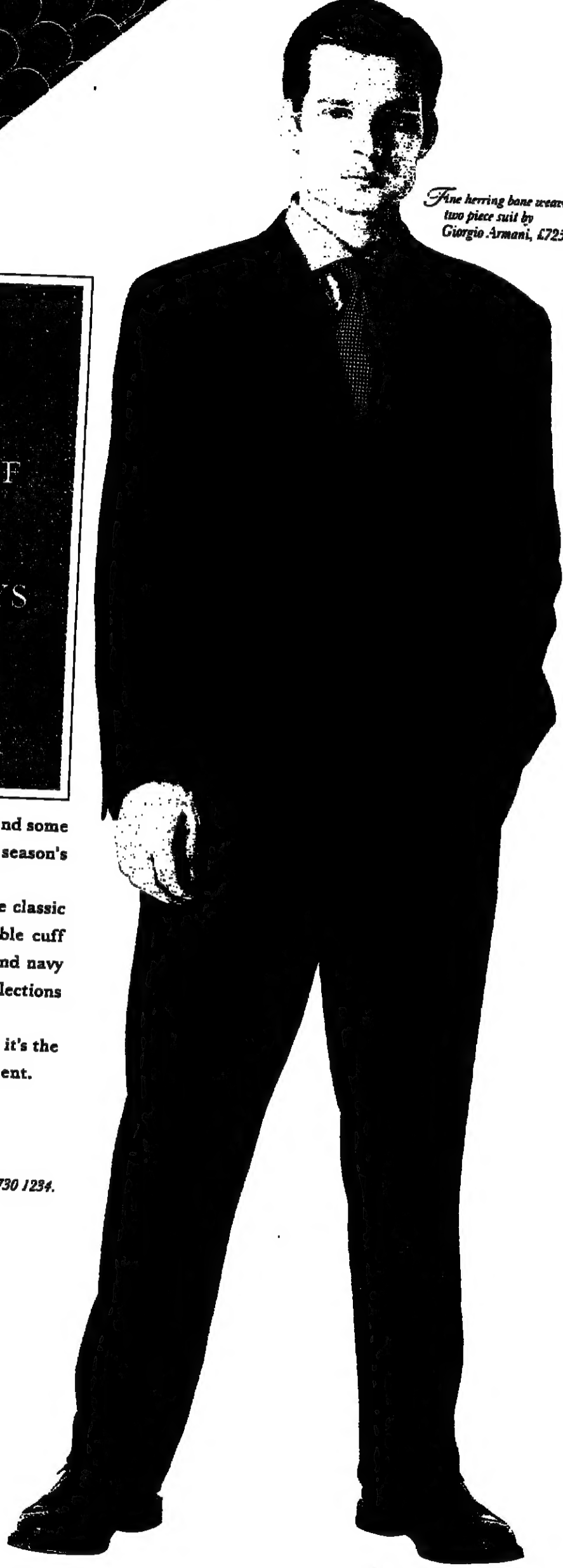


Thin cabana jacket, £175 and navy cotton trousers, £69, both by Zegna Yachting.

Woven silk tie by Valentino, £45.



Crew neck cotton sweater, £99, button down collar shirt, £59, by Zegna Yachting.



Fine herring bone weave two piece suit by Giorgio Armani, £725.

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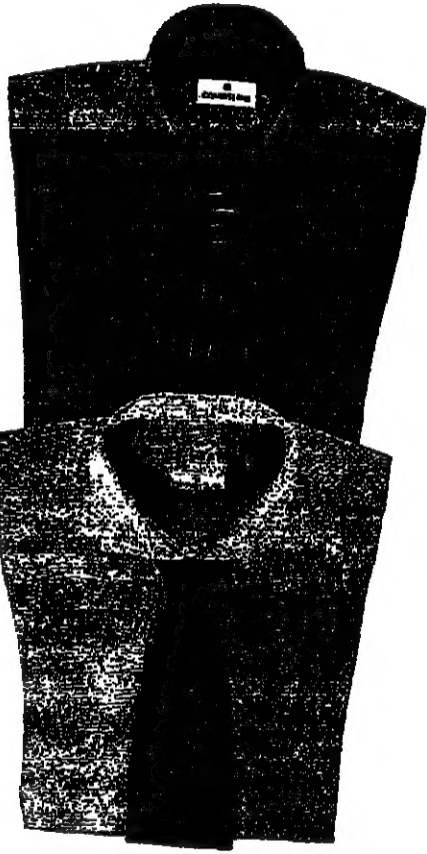
In the Menswear Department there's the classic blue suit by Giorgio Armani, a Harrods double cuff cotton shirt, a blue cabana jacket in linen and navy trousers by Zegna Yachting. There are also collections from many other leading men's designers.

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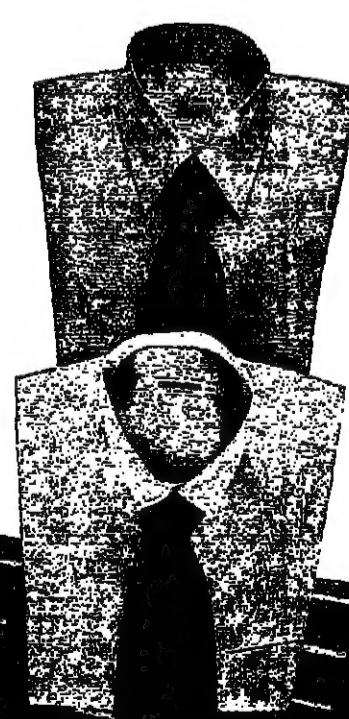
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Silk tie, £49.95, and twill cotton shirt, £79, both by Cerruti.



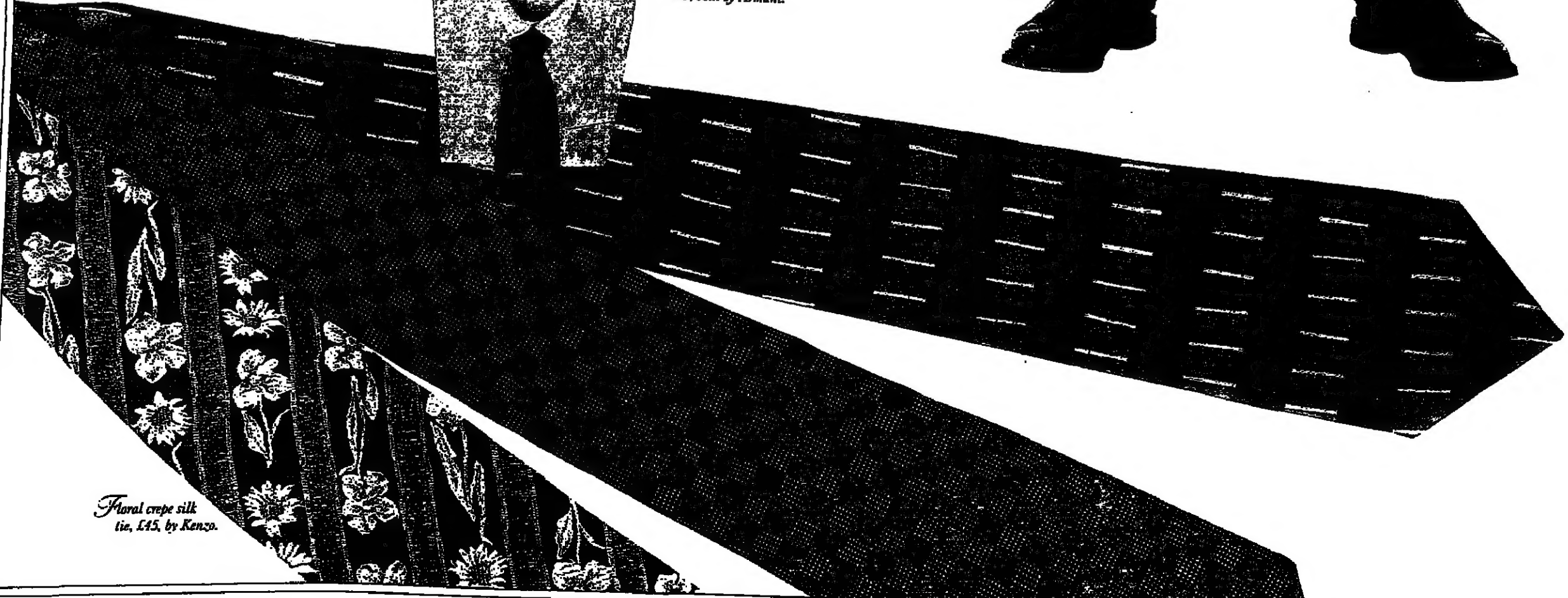
Printed silk tie, £55, and open weave shirt, £99, both by Ermenegildo Zegna.

Woolen silk tie, £59, with Van Laak shirt, £119.



Silk mix tie, £55, and fine pique rib cotton shirt, £99, both by Armani.

Floral crepe silk tie, £45, by Kenzo.



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## Police admit losing British tourist's evidence of attack

FROM ROGER MAYNARD IN SYDNEY

POLICE lost a vital statement given by Paul Onions, a British tourist, detailing an attack by Ivan Milat, the alleged Australian serial killer, it emerged during the fourth day of the backpacker murder trial in Sydney yesterday.

A woman officer who interviewed the Briton after he was kidnapped and assaulted in January 1990 admitted that police had been unable to find the document.

With the help of her notebook from the time, Jennifer Nicholson, a senior police constable, remembered a visibly shaken Mr Onions arriving at Bowral police station near the Belanglo state forest, where the bodies of all seven murdered backpackers were found. But even though he provided important details of his alleged attacker's appearance, vehicle and place of work, the defendant remained free for another four years.

Joanne Berry, a mother of four who came to Mr Onions's rescue on the motorway after Mr Milat allegedly fired a shot at him and wrestled him to the ground, told the court he was "absolutely petrified and very close to tears" as he sought refuge in her van.

"Please stop, he's got a gun," Mr Onions pleaded with Mrs Berry, seconds after throwing himself into the vehicle's path and flagging her down. "It gave my family a bit of a fright," she said. The

defendant's former wife, Karen, told the court that Mr Milat was rarely without a gun. He had a pistol which he would stuff down the side of his boot when he went out, even taking it to the cinema. He also had a revolver which he kept in a wooden case under her bed and hid under the seat in the back of his car whenever he travelled.

"Ivan just liked guns," said Mrs Milat, who was married to him for six years. "Ivan knew how to use guns and was confident about handling them."

They went to the Belanglo state forest four times in 1983 and on one occasion her husband had shot two kangaroos. Clearly upset by the memory of their time together, Mrs Milat began to cry and was allowed to leave the court for a few minutes to compose herself. She described how he kept himself strong by using a zinc galvanised pipe with plastic buckets of cement at each end for weightlifting. "Ivan was a very fit person who did weightlifting every night of the week."

Carolynne Milat, the defendant's sister-in-law, again insisted under cross-examination that she did not change the date of a photograph showing the accused man, in order to prove he could not have killed Caroline Clarke and Joanne Walters, British backpackers, at Easter

1992. The prosecution claimed that Ivan Milat had written on the back of the photographs, indicating they had been taken on a camping holiday in 1991. A vehicle registration sticker on a car in one of the pictures also showed that it expired in August 1991.

Mrs Milat said she was wearing a pair of shoes in one of the photographs which she had bought in the United States after Easter 1991. "Are you deliberately seeking to give evidence in an attempt to protect Ivan Milat?" asked Mark Tedeschi, for the prosecution. "No, no," she replied.

"I suggest you changed 1991 to 1992 after you found out that Ivan Milat had been charged with an offence that occurred at Easter 1992," he went on. "No," she insisted.

Ivan Milat, 51, has pleaded not guilty to killing seven tourists and kidnapping an eighth. The case continues. **Assault case:** Police were last night investigating a complaint against William Milat, a brother of the accused man, after Warren Clarke, a Sydney Morning Herald photographer, was allegedly assaulted outside the court. Television film showed William Milat punching the cameraman who was attempting to photograph him and his wife, Carolynne. Police said they would watch the video evidence before deciding whether to bring charges.



The Queen and President Havel of the Czech Republic at the Brno city hall yesterday as 50,000 people turned out to see the royal visitor

## Cheering Czechs greet the Queen's city walkabout

FROM ALAN HAMILTON IN BRNO

NOT since the Queen visited South African black townships last year has she drawn such crowds as turned out on the second day of her state visit to the Czech Republic yesterday.

Police estimated that at least 50,000 people, with many more crowding upstairs windows, were on the streets of Brno, the country's second city, to catch a glimpse of the Queen as she made a four-hour visit accompanied by President Havel.

Distinguished visitors to the Czech lands rarely venture beyond Prague, and if they do it is only to some small

but picture-postcard pretty Austro-Hungarian town. Brno, the joint birthplace with Enfield of the wartime Bren gun and still a big arms-manufacturing centre, is industrial, strewn with ugly tower blocks and has a population of 400,000.

British officials were delighted, but not wholly surprised, by the huge turnout to see the Queen. Since it opened three weeks ago, an exhibition of replicas of the English and Scottish crown jewels in Brno city hall has drawn 25,000 visitors, proving that those parts of Central Europe once ruled by the Habsburgs still have an appreciation of hereditary monarchy. The crowd, which packed the main

square and every side street, cheered and applauded as the Queen made a brief appearance on the city hall balcony to tell the population how delighted she was to be in Brno, "at the crossroads of our continent". On behalf of the British people, she wished the city prosperity and a successful future and gave it a brief wave of a black-gloved hand.

Queen and President then went on a short walkabout through one of the city's broad main streets, with ten-deep crowds waving paper Union Jacks and Czech flags.

The Queen has proved hugely popular in Poland and the Czech Republic, where she is seen as a

symbol of stability above governments as much as the representative of a nation within the European Union and Nato which both countries are anxious to join.

Czech feelings towards the Queen were summed up during a visit to Brno's Constitutional Court, where Judge Ivana Janu, the court's vice-president, told the Queen: "We greatly appreciate the fact that you are making your first visit only now, and that you never accepted the invitation of those who ruled here without the legitimacy conferred by free elections."

Letters, page 19



Severin: sailing tricky Indonesian waters

## Voyage in naturalist's wake

BY PAUL MAYNARD

THE adventurer Tim Severin yesterday set off in a make-shift yacht to follow the path of Alfred Russel Wallace, the 19th-century naturalist, in circling the treacherous Indonesian archipelago.

He set sail from Warbal Island in the Kei group in a boat constructed by islanders, using only locally gathered materials. Mr Severin, 55, was the second Briton to begin a risky voyage. Peter Bird, 43, left Vostochy, near Vladivostok

in Russia, in an attempt to row 6,000 nautical miles to San Francisco. It will be his third attempt to cross the Pacific.

Mr Severin, who lives in Co Cork, has a more successful record, which includes crossing the Atlantic in an attempt to demonstrate that St Brendan was the first to sight America. He has also travelled extensively in China and Mongolia, on horseback, as well as retracing the path of

the crusader forces of Guy de Bouillon across Europe to Jerusalem on the breed of horse which the medieval soldiers used.

His latest trip is scheduled to finish in Sulawesi after a 1,200-mile trip. Wallace, whose route Mr Severin is retracing, travelled the area in the 1850s and 1860s. His correspondence with Charles Darwin is credited with helping the development of the theory of evolution.

## Pope calls for 'feminist' nuns

THE Pope yesterday called on nuns to promote a "new feminism", arguing they have a right to take part in decision-making at all levels of the Roman Catholic Church (Ruth Gledhill writes). But he said that women should not imitate "models of male domination".

In an exhortation, *Vita Consecrata*, he said the Church depended on nuns for new efforts in fostering Christian doctrine, morals, family and social life.

## Briton in baby-smuggling trial

FROM AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE IN BUCHAREST

A BRITISH man goes on trial in Romania today charged with trying to smuggle into Hungary a 15-month girl hidden in the boot of his car.

John Boast, 46, faces a jail sentence of between three months and two years. Vergiliu Rosca, the prosecutor, said. He added that the case was "complex and delicate" and it appeared that the aim was not to make money out of abducting Laura Varga but to give her a better life. The

child, who has nine brothers, had been abandoned in a hospital at Oradea, in the northwest, at birth and her parents are believed to have given up all rights to her. She is currently with foster parents in Britain.

Mr Boast, who works for a British charity, was arrested last December. He was freed on condition that he did not leave Romania pending his trial. Mr Rosca said that Mr Boast had denied the charges,

saying that he was arrested while driving Varga back to the hospital after taking her for a ride in his car.

The estimated 100,000 abandoned children in Romania and their poor living conditions have attracted Western couples wanting to adopt. Of 1,789 adoptions by foreign couples in 1995, only 1,070 were approved by the Government, the others apparently allowed by officials for a "consideration".

# Hector

hec.ball@europeonline.com

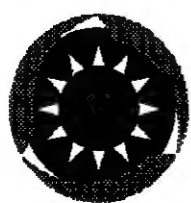
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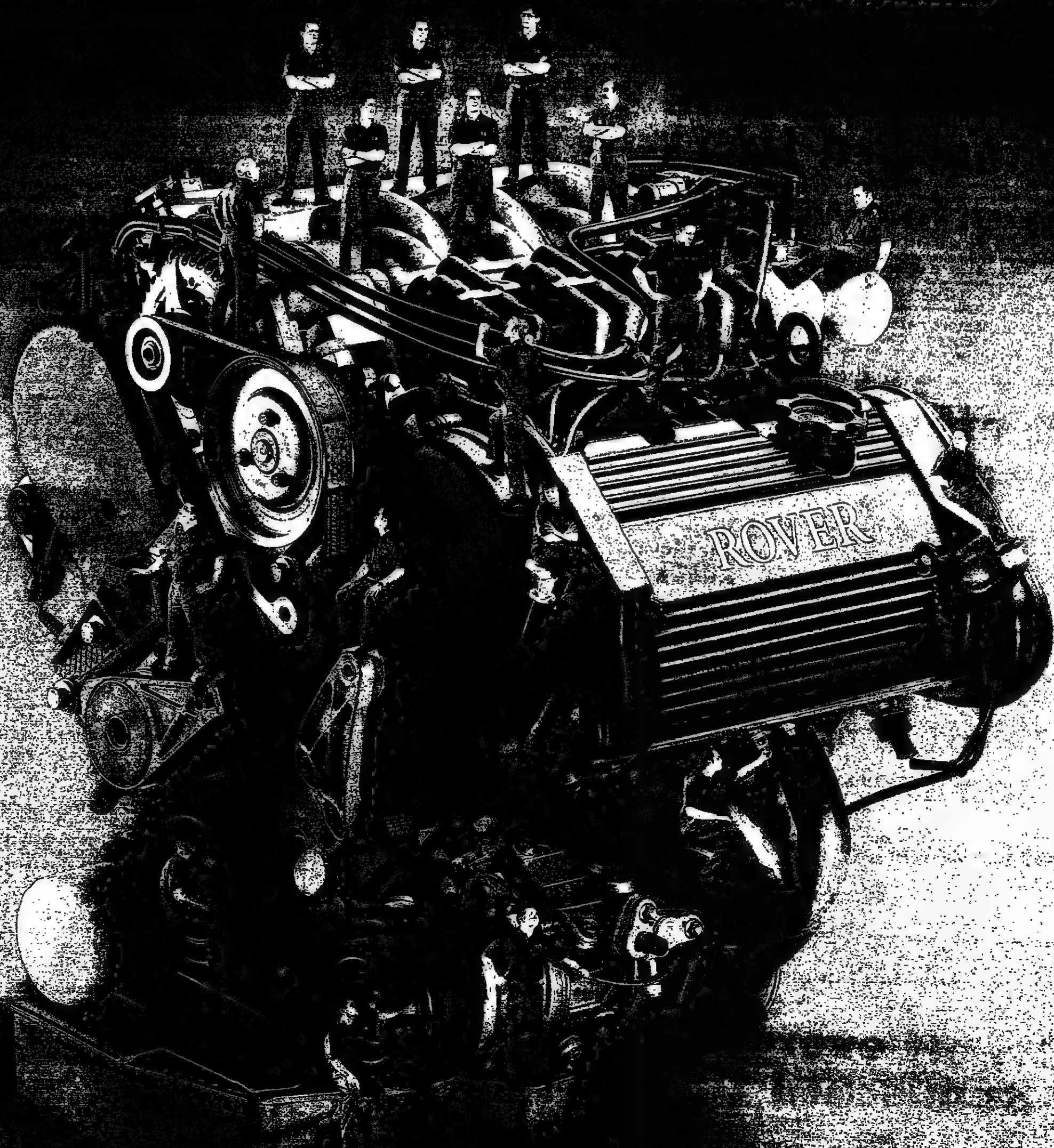
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Accusations of scaremongering in Commons

# Labour plans attacked as mere vote-catching

By James Landale, Political Reporter

JOHN MAJOR and Tony Blair traded furious blows in rowdy Commons exchanges yesterday as the Prime Minister attacked Labour's plans to resolve the beef crisis as "public-relations nonsense".

While Tory MPs accused Labour of scaremongering and using the issue to score party political points, Mr Major angrily told the Commons: "Labour is considering votes, we are considering the industry and the national interest."

Earlier, Labour launched an eight-point plan to restore confidence in the beef industry. It included stricter enforcement of slaughterhouse rules, backed by prosecutions; random BSE checks on brains of slaughtered cattle; publication of list of foods containing beef products; a safety review of mechanically recovered meat; a quality assurance scheme to show where beef comes from; a ban on all specified beef offal in human and animal food; the creation of a food standards agency; and an enhanced role for the Chief Medical Officer.

During Prime Minister's Questions, Mr Blair challenged Mr Major to reveal the Cabinet's discussions on measures to resolve the crisis and asked if they included Labour's plans "which have already won wide-ranging support across industry".

Mr Major said Labour's

proposal was "a mixture of motherhood, action that is already being taken and largely misses many of the matters that need to be dealt with".

Amid noisy scenes, Tory MPs repeatedly jeered at Mr Blair and several accused him of "speaking for Brussels".

Holding up Labour's plans, Mr Major said: "They call for proper enforcement of controls in slaughterhouses — yet they opposed the setting up of the Meat Hygiene Service. They call for random tests on the brains of cattle — completely irrelevant because we have stopped all brain products that could be affected from entering the food chain."

Mr Major said the call for a ban on specified bovine offal

from cattle under six months overlooked the fact that the advisory committee considered this to be unnecessary.

Mr Blair replied: "I do not think we have ever heard anything quite so pathetic." He said random testing of brains had been recommended by a government committee and scientists had said abattoir regulations needed to be enforced. Almost half the slaughterhouses were "not up to scratch" and none had been prosecuted.

Mr Blair urged Mr Major to stop shirking his responsibility. "Unless you can agree proposals now with the food industry, retailers and consumer organisations, so we present a united front, we will

never have the Government back in control of events rather than being controlled by them."

Mr Major countered: "What is pathetic is this document. And what is also pathetic is this wiggling change of policy after you and Harriet Harman [the Shadow Health Secretary] did everything you could to extract maximum political advantage at the cost potentially of jobs in the beef industry and the national interest."

David Harris (C, St Ives) urged Mr Major to avert the disaster facing the beef industry by bringing forward proposals for selective slaughter. Mr Major said a range of substantial options were under consideration but cautioned against issuing proposals in a piecemeal fashion.

Paddy Ashdown, Liberal Democrat leader, told the Prime Minister: "If you bring forward an urgent plan of action designed to restore public confidence and make the British herd BSE-free as soon as possible, based on culling and other measures, we will support you."

Earlier, Douglas Hogg, the Secretary of State for Agriculture, condemned the hysterical reaction to the crisis and repeatedly insisted British beef was safe to eat.

Letters, page 19



Tom Cope, a farmer near Lichfield, Staffordshire, says no cash would compensate for the loss of Flo, his prize Holstein Friesian cow. She produces 15,000 litres of milk a year, more than double the national average

## Future for priceless pedigrees bleak as farmers await ruling

By Michael Hornsby and Andrew Pierce

MILLIONS of pounds could be wiped off the value of Britain's pedigree cow market, one of the most important in the world, if the Government orders a selective slaughter policy of cattle over a certain age.

The stakes are high for the owners of pedigree breeds. Some cows cost more than a two-bedroom cottage in the Cotswolds. Their owners fear that their investments may end up in incinerators with paltry compensation.

Flo, a seven-year-old Holstein Friesian dairy cow, is the

most valuable in Britain with a £75,000 price tag. Her owners, Andrew Cope and his father, Tom, from Huddlesford House Farm near Lichfield, Staffordshire, fear the worst.

Andrew Cope said: "She is so valuable she is not worth insuring, because it would cost too much. She is recognised as the best dairy cow in the country. She was given a rating of 96 points out of 100 by the Holstein Friesian Society last autumn."

"We will not be affected much if they destroy cows at the end of their productive life. If they destroy all animals over a certain age it would be devastating. How could you be compensated for an animal like Flo?"

Flo, an elegant black and white cow, who was grazing placidly yesterday, is a prodigious milker, producing 15,000 litres a year, more than double the national average. In an anticipated lifespan of 15 years, Flo will create progeny worth hundreds of thousands of pounds.

Brian Draper, who keeps a herd of Holstein Friesians near Shrewsbury, paid 65,000 guineas four years ago for Grantchester Heather the 8th, the highest price paid for a cow. "We are in the lap of the gods," he said. "Some people are talking of a cull of all animals over the age of 30 months. It would wipe out most of our herd, which it has taken a lifetime to build up."

Anne Hardy, of the Holstein Friesian Society, said: "There are about 1,600 animals registered with us which are classified as 'excellent', with a rating of between 90 and 97 out of 100. It would be tragic if animals like this had to be slaughtered."

Peter Old, of Overmoigne, Dorset, paid 45,000 guineas in Perth 18 months ago for

Thurston Ideal, a Charolais bull, a prized French breed. He said: "Hopefully, the cull will not affect breeding bulls, but I also have a Charolais cow, Moynon Fresia, which is worth 25,000 guineas and won 27 trophies last year. We have never had a case of BSE in our herd."

Barney Hodge, who paid £17,000 last year for Crichtell Inspiration Pamela the 13th, a five-year-old Friesian, said: "I would not let her go for £50,000 let alone £30,000. She is a rapidly appreciating asset. She has great ancestry. Her grandparents, who were Canadian, were worth even more."

"She is one of the highest indexed cows in the United Kingdom. Despite the BSE scare I think was optimistic that the pedigree market would hold up," Mr Hodge said. "There was a tremendous sale in Perth yesterday where calves were selling for an average £3,700. It is a confidence booster."

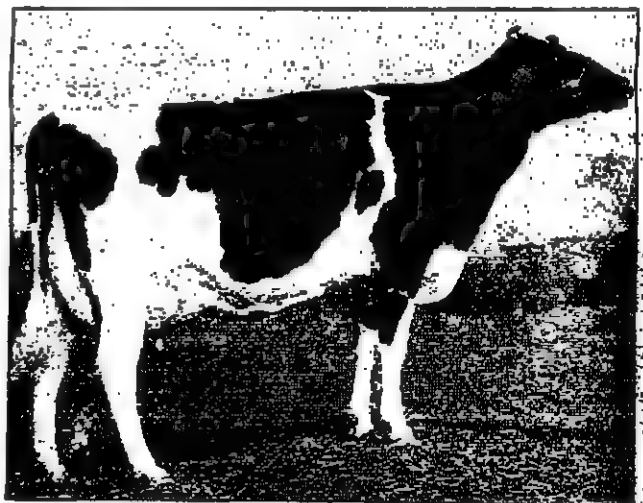
Doug Mash, from Chessington, Buckinghamshire, paid 26,000 guineas for Di Di, aged

eight, a record for the Broadmeadow Limousin herd. If the pedigree market collapses, he will blame politicians and the media for twisting the scientific facts.

"I don't know what Di Di is worth now. It's like anything else: she is only worth what people are prepared to pay. We have to stand firm. A slaughtering policy is not necessary," he said. "What is required from politicians is a public service statement, by the leaders of all three parties, supporting British beef. We have been used as political footballs by Tony Blair."

Lord Rathcreedan, from the Norton & Brookbank auction house in Tetbury, Gloucestershire, who sold Grantchester Heather the 8th, said: "It can be like the housing market. If it is rock bottom at the bottom, it can have a knock-on effect."

Ian Kerr, the secretary of the British Limousin Cattle Society, which is celebrating its 25th anniversary, was more upbeat. "There is about as much chance of pedigree cattle being exposed to BSE as there is of finding a man on Mars."



Grantchester Heather the 8th, which fetched a record 65,000 guineas at auction four years ago

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Call for 'Euro-friendly' attitude

# EU leaders rally to Major with relief for beef disaster

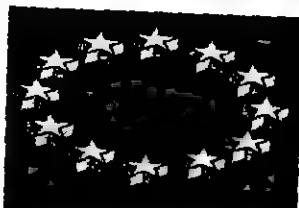
FROM CHARLES BRENNER AND RICHARD OWEN IN TURIN

EUROPE'S leaders will reassure John Major today that he can count on their largesse to soften the financial blow of Britain's beef disaster but in meeting to launch the Maastricht review conference they will also make clear that they expect a more Euro-friendly approach from London.

As Mr Major flew to Turin for the ceremonial opening of the year-long negotiations of the inter-governmental conference, Germany followed France in promising to make special funds were cleared to help to staunch Britain's losses.

"Solidarity also means money over and above that which the EU would be obliged to pay in any case," said Karl Lamers, a powerful figure in the German parliamentary group. It was "not always easy" to support the British, he added, but "quite apart from the psychological consequences of leaving Britain alone, there would also be severe economic consequences that none of us would want".

A decision at the leaders'



TURIN SUMMIT

level will be required for Europe to release relief aid. Estimated at about £1 billion, the handout will knock a hole in the common agriculture policy budget. Before the emergency, Jacques Santer, President of the European Commission, had been aiming to persuade the 15 leaders to transfer spare cash from the agriculture budget to transport projects as a way of creating jobs.

The beef crisis has altered the chemistry among the leaders as they gather. The quarantine has given physical form to Britain's stark political isolation from most of the other 14 states on Europe's future. At the same time, in the view of many EU officials, it has made Britain beholden to the EU and demonstrated the worth of "solidarity" among members. Mr Major is expected to be the first item this morning.

Senior officials from continental states said they were already detecting a gentler

style after Britain was forced to apply to Brussels for economic help. Erik Derycke, the Belgian Foreign Minister, said that Britain had behaved in a "much more conciliatory" way at a foreign ministers' meeting this week, lifting some objections to giving the European Parliament an observers' role at the conference.

Mr Major is expected, however, to make his own plea for Euro-solidarity, urging colleagues to lift the crippling ban on British beef exports. He is likely to receive a frosty response, given the anger which has swept the continent this week over what every other country sees as Britain's inadequate response.

Although Britain is the most isolated member as Europe starts renegotiating elements of the Maastricht treaty, other leaders also have conflicting positions. Wim Kok, the Dutch Prime Minister, for example, is barely on speaking terms with President Chirac as a result of the French leader's attacks on his country's drugs policy.

Even the Franco-German partnership is suffering strain. President Chirac has irked Bonn with his push for a separate European defence arrangement and his impassioned demand for the efforts of the EU to be devoted above all to creating jobs and protecting the "social rights" of its people. Bonn is wary of what sounds like a reversion to French protectionist instincts.

Italian officials were working last night to smooth over national differences on the formal orders to be given to negotiators. Britain was concerned that the instructions had the makings of a federal agenda. The position paper of the Italian Government this week defined the IGC's goal as "fulfilling the federal vocation of the EU" at a time when it is heading towards a single currency and a common foreign and defence policy.

Leading article, page 19  
Letters, page 19



An Italian police officer walking past the flags of EU states yesterday outside the centre in Turin where the inter-governmental conference is being held. About 5,000 police will handle security at the opening today

## Bonn offers cash to bolster unity

FROM ROGER BOYES IN BONN

GERMANY'S key European strategists proposed yesterday that extra funds should be made available to help British farmers with blighted cattle.

Wolfgang Schäuble — right-hand man to Helmut Kohl, the Chancellor — and Karl Lamers, his fellow Christian Democrat, were trying to push forward with the

push forward with the Europol police network, to formulate common European immigration and asylum policies, to move closer towards making the West European Union the military arm of Europe, and to build up the powers of the European Parliament.

Over the past ten days Germany has allowed its impatience with Britain to surface. Klaus Kinkel, the said he was "disappointed and sad" that Britain was "simply against any further steps towards integration".

Yesterday David Davis, Minister of State at the Foreign Office, hit back in a long article in the German press. "It does not help to assert that German views are correct and European, while Great Britain's views are incorrect and lacking in vision. We, too, are a European country with a European history."

## NFU seeks to dictate agenda

BY MICHAEL HORNSBY, AGRICULTURE CORRESPONDENT

AS JOHN MAJOR seeks Europe's help for his beleaguered beef industry in Turin, he is fighting on an agenda that is largely dictated by a bluff Nottinghamshire farmer.

Sir David Nash, president of the National Farmers' Union, almost single-handedly forced the Government to abandon the do-nothing policy announced by Stephen Dorrell, the Health Secretary, in the Commons on Monday.

Yesterday Sir David's scouts were in Turin, in advance of the European Union's inter-governmental Conference, seeking financial support for action to salvage the British beef industry.

David Evans, the NFU's director-general, met Walter Luchetti, the president of the European Union's Council of Agriculture Ministers, and secured agreement for an emergency session of the council next Monday in Brussels. It is

ironic that it has taken probably the greatest threat to farming this century to galvanise a body whose influence has been shrinking for decades as control over agricultural policy moved to Brussels and the weight of the farming vote declined.

Sir David, who runs a 1,000-acre sheep and arable farm at Budby in Nottinghamshire, became president of the NFU in 1991. His initial instinct was to keep a low profile over BSE. However, within hours of Mr Dorrell's failure to announce new measures on Monday, swiftly followed by the EU ban on British beef, the NFU convened a meeting of leading food retailers and manufacturers, and got their backing for the destruction of cows at the end of their productive life.

On Tuesday Mr Major was forced to admit that the Government was actively considering the NFU proposal.

## Threat by French to slaughter cattle

Paris: Cattle of British origin in France will be impounded and may be slaughtered, the Agriculture Ministry said yesterday as the French beef market plunged again (Ben Macintyre writes).

Responding to demands from French unions that no British beef be allowed to reach the domestic market, Philippe Vasseur, the Agriculture Minister, said that 70,000 British-born calves aged under six months would be rounded up and confined.

A decision on whether to destroy them will be made on Monday. Stocks of frozen and fresh British beef in France will also be impounded.

## Germany to label 'clean' stocks

Bonn: All beef imported by Germany is to carry a certificate declaring it does not come from Britain or Switzerland (Roger Boyes writes). Horst Seehofer, the Health Minister, said he was issuing the order in the absence of any firm European Union decision on the supervision and control of suspect cattle and beef.

## Greece destroys imported meat

Athens: Greek authorities impounded 40 tonnes of British beef around the country and ordered its destruction, after a 75-year-old man died from Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease (John Carr writes). A second man is in a serious condition with the disease. An average of four people in Greece die of CJD every year without it being linked to BSE.

## Hong Kong ban

Hong Kong: The import of British beef was banned by the Hong Kong Government yesterday. The move came after critics had accused the administration of ducking the issue out of political motives and complaints by butchers that beef sales were falling.

## Veal tops the menu

Turin: The European Union leaders will be lunching on veal today, but their hosts insist it will be from local Piedmont cattle (Richard Owen writes).

While the leaders are eating at the Meriden Hotel, next to the Lingotto Conference Centre, the Foreign Ministers will also be eating a dish made up of beef as they lunch under the glass-domed "bubble" on the roof of the Lingotto, the Fiat car factory built in 1917,

which still has its car-testing track on the roof.

The heads of government will be served mixed vegetables, followed by asparagus, fillet of veal and wild fruits. The Foreign Ministers will eat bresaola, a dish of air-dried raw beef thinly sliced and served with oil and lemon, followed by potatoes garnished with Fontina cheese. They will end their meal with spuma, a sweet soufflé made from three kinds of chocolate.

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Young Afghans dice with death in fields littered with booby-traps and discarded armaments

## 'Landmines' bitter legacy brings more carnage to Kabul

LALAI began clearing mines when he was 11. He started his story with the same words he used to finish it: "One morning I went into the fields to collect firewood." Rain had washed topsoil from the fields outside Koochkin, a desultory village of crumbled earthen walls and houses a few miles north of Kabul.

The area had been heavily mined by both Russians and the Mujahidin. As Lalai walked towards a piece of wood he noticed the exposed black cap of an anti-personnel mine. "I needed the wood and I did not want anyone else to tread on the mine," he said. He dug it up with a stick.

Four years and more than 400 mines later, Lalai's reputation in the Afghan capital precedes him. There are many stories in Kabul, the most mined city in history, of children setting up freecell businesses defusing the lethal ordnance and selling it back to the government army, but it was Lalai that the Halo Trust, a British-based mine clearance non-governmental organisation working in the Afghan capital, most remembered.

"We met him two years ago," recalled Dr Farid Homayoun, Halo's British-trained resident manager in the city. "We had just finished work on a minefield outside Koochkin when this young kid ran up to us with a bag of ten anti-personnel mines. They were still fused. He wouldn't give them to us, but wanted to sell them, as he said it was his profession. We couldn't talk him out of it, so we had to pay him 9,000 alphas (\$1) for each mine."

"As we left he laughed at us, running through the minefield, shouting that he had ripped us off and that the



Anthony Loyd reports from Kabul on the dangers for civilians trying to eke out an existence in a former war zone

Afghan soldiers buy each mine for a quarter of the price.

Afghanistan has an almost supernatural aura of malice, littered as it is with mines, booby-traps and unexploded munitions. As we left Koochkin, where the villagers told us that Lalai was now based with soldiers in the former Soviet Embassy inside Kabul, we spoke to a group of three Mujahidin at an outpost by the edge of the road.

"Do not leave the track," the commander warned us, "there are mines everywhere." Two days later we saw the man again by chance. He was in hospital with most of his right hand missing. A booby-

trapped stick had exploded in his fingers as he stoked the fire. You cannot even smoke without worrying about the ash falling on discarded weaponry.

At Kabul's Karle Se hospital, most of the young patients were mine victims, their skin stretched raggedly over their stumps. Amid a series of ruined lives and stolen childhood, there were children without legs, hands or arms, and others blinded by shrapnel. Some had trodden on detonation caps, hit trip-wires, or picked up booby-trapped torches and watches.

Dr Günter Wunhofer, a surgeon working for the ICRC at the hospital, explained the realities of such injuries. "The mine explodes and usually the foot is completely, traumatically amputated, sometimes including the lower or whole leg. The blast destroys the leg muscle regardless."

"We usually have to amputate just below the knee. In 50 per cent of cases, the other leg is badly damaged by splinters. In a third of cases, bone fragments are shot upwards into the groin and stomach together with leather from the shoe. Males often lose one or both testicles." There was no such thing, it seemed, as simply losing a foot.

"It's quiet now, as it is winter," he added. "We've only had 25 amputations in 29 days. When agricultural work starts in the spring, it'll be worse again." We found Lalai playing



A woman maimed by a mine tests her artificial leg at the Red Cross workshop in Kabul

cards with some young fighters in a burnt-out basement of the embassy building.

Now aged 15, savvy and streetwise, his hands moved fast as he dealt out the cards. "I liked clearing mines," he

said. "I was good at it. The villagers called me 'the expert' and often asked me to clear their fields for them. I did it for two years."

Lalai rolled up his left trouser leg to show the heavy plastic prosthesis. "My fate is cruel, but it is the will of Allah," he said, explaining how the accident in which he lost his leg happened. "One morning I went into the fields to collect firewood."

## Red Cross study questions military value of weapon

By Michael Binyon, Diplomatic Editor

THE limited military value of anti-personnel landmines is far outweighed by the appalling humanitarian consequences of their use in conflicts, a study commissioned by the Red Cross says.

The study by Brigadier Patrick Blagden, a retired British mine clearance adviser to the United Nations, is one of the first to look at the military value of a primitive weapon now killing and maiming 20,000 civilians a year. With contributions from military commanders from ten coun-

tries, the study calls on governments to ban all anti-personnel mines as a matter of urgency.

The study says mines cause more casualties, impose bigger limits to tactical flexibility and do more to alienate populations than armed forces using them have acknowledged. Their military value is question-

### Briton is seen alive

Tatav, Cambodia: Christopher Howes, 36, a British landmine removal expert and his interpreter, held hostage by an armed gang, have been seen alive at a Khmer Rouge guerrilla camp. (AP)

able: when armies clear minefields by roller, plough, flail or explosives the mines have no effect; they do not protect infantry and keep only a small percentage of enemy troops out of action.

The study is powerful evidence which the Red Cross will put before a conference attempting to rewrite the rules on landmine use in Geneva next month. America has hinted it is ready to push for a total ban, and Britain wants much tighter restrictions.

Brigadier Blagden says mines dropped at random across fields and mountains would certainly cause vastly increased civilian casualties, even if they are designed to be self-destructing and self-deac-

## Armed Zulus march in memory of massacre

FROM INIGO GILMORE IN JOHANNESBURG

MORE than 5,000 Zulus mostly affiliated to the Inkatha Freedom Party commemorated a massacre in the centre of Johannesburg in 1994 by marching through the city yesterday. Many openly defied a police ban on carrying weapons in a show of strength against the ruling African National Congress.

Wielding rawhide shields, sticks and spears, Zulu men and women, many in colourful traditional garb, converged

on meeting points near the city before moving to the central business district. With heads and clubs held high they sang battle songs, ululated and scowled, rushing forward in mock battle formations and chanting their defiance of the weapons ban.

The march marked the anniversary of the 1994 Shell House killings, when ANC gunmen shot dead eight Inkatha supporters outside the ANC's Johannesburg

headquarters while more than 50 were killed in and around the city. In anticipation of the march and demonstrations in other areas, the Government last week banned the carrying of traditional weapons in 74 magisterial districts. Inkatha said the ban was unenforceable and would lead to violence and unrest, maintaining that carrying spears was a symbol of manhood among Zulus.

With helicopters clattering overhead the demonstrators were flanked by thousands of heavily-armed police and soldiers as they marched through the city centre. At the front of the crowd a hostel dweller carried a placard reading "Mandela deserves a death sentence." Alongside him an induna (headman) in animal skins beat his shield with a club while singing about battle victories and chanting anti-ANC slogans.

Prospects of the march caused fitters in financial markets. The Shell House killings have remained a source of tension between the ANC and Inkatha. However, there was almost a carnival atmosphere and despite isolated reports of gunfire, stone throwing and tyre burning, the march passed off peacefully. This owed much to negotiations between the police and march organisers, and a reluctance to seize weapons.

## Experts to sway the Eiffel tourists

FROM BEN MACINTYRE IN PARIS

TO SCOTCH the persistent rumour that the Eiffel Tower bends dangerously in hot and windy weather, the Paris authorities yesterday opened a new observation centre in the building that will allow nervous visitors to monitor the tower's movements for themselves.

For years Parisians have enjoyed putting the wind up tourists by propagating the myth that the tower sways by as much as 30ft in certain climatic conditions.

According to scientists, the new high-tech monitoring system, using laser beams and installed on the first level of the tower, will demonstrate, among other things, that even on the hottest, windiest days Gustave Eiffel's tower never bends by more than six inches.

The new observatory is part of a wider project to lure visitors back to the 1043ft "Iron Lady" of Paris, now undergoing her 18th renovation in 106 years.

The New Society for Operating the Eiffel Tower yesterday outlined a six-year plan for an extended underground complex under the building, including a cinema, sandwich bar and left-luggage office.

## Zia steps down to clear way for election

FROM AHMED FAZI IN DHAKA

FEARS of violence gripped Bangladesh last night after Khalida Zia, the Prime Minister, agreed to step down and call fresh elections, closing a bitter feud with the mainstream opposition.

Soldiers in trucks and paramilitary troops patrolled Dhaka's streets amid widening tension as tens of thousands of anti-government protesters continued their siege of the government minis-

tries. There was no official word on when Begum Zia, 51, would resign along with her 27-member council of ministers, appointed a fortnight ago after a disputed general election last month gave the ruling Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) almost all the 330 parliamentary seats.

Begum Zia also agreed on fresh multi-party polls in May under the supervision of a neutral caretaker government

after prematurely dissolving parliament, which her political rivals refused to recognise as a legally constituted body. The main opposition parties which boycotted the February 15 poll accused government leaders of manipulating turnout figures by stuffing ballot-boxes. Begum Zia blamed the opposition for the "vote carnage" which left more than 110 people dead.

The political turmoil which began over a disputed by-election result in a rural constituency in Magura district in central Bangladesh in March 1994 led to street fights by armed activists of rival groups and arrest and intimidation of opposition leaders. Many believe that the members of the Awami League, the biggest opposition group, may try to settle scores with political adversaries after the fall of the BNP Government.

## Finance Minister quits



Liebenberg: replaced from within the ANC

Johannesburg: President Mandela yesterday appointed South Africa's first non-white Finance Minister from the ruling African National Congress, signalling the end of the Government's attempts to reassure international markets by reserving the job for a white outsider (Inigo Gilmore writes).

Announcing a Cabinet reshuffle, Mr Mandela said Chris Liebenberg, a banker, had asked to be relieved of his duties and would be replaced by Trevor Manuel, the Trade and Industry Minister. The appointment comes at a difficult time when the rand is being battered on international money markets and yesterday, before the announcement, the currency fell again against the dollar.

## Church 'bars grave of mixed-race baby'

FROM QUENTIN LETTS IN NEW YORK

A BAPTIST deacon has been accused of ordering a newborn baby's body to be disinterred because she was of mixed race and his church "did not allow half-breeds".

The family of Whitney Johnson, who died 19 hours after her birth last week, say they were told to remove the body from the graveyard of Barnes Creek Baptist Church in Thomasville, Georgia, after church authorities learnt that although the baby's mother was white, her father was black.

Whitney was born without a properly formed skull to Jeffrey "Bubba" Johnson, 25, and Jamie Wireman, 18. Her funeral was held at the 19th-century claspboard church and she was buried in a white

dress with pink bows. The demand that Whitney's body should be moved was allegedly made by Logan Lewis, the church deacon.

Sylvia Leverett, Whitney's grandmother, said: "He didn't care what we said — they didn't allow half-breeds."

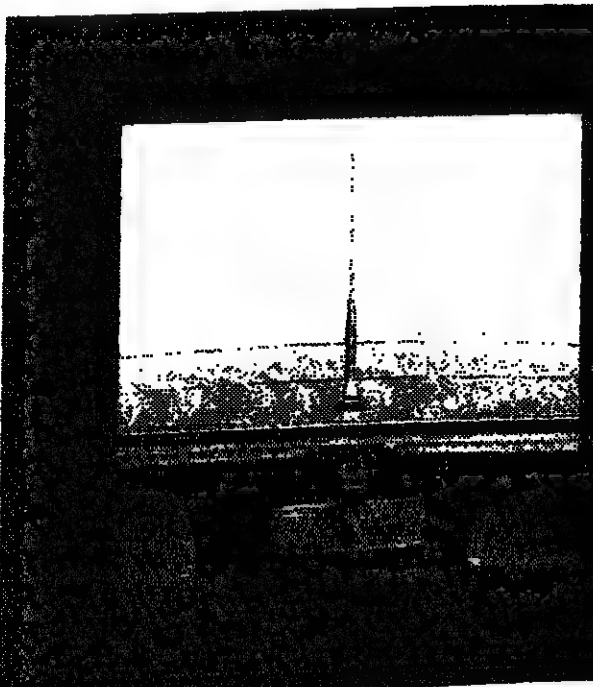
A white relative of the baby has also reportedly taken the church's side in the dispute. Mr Lewis said: "This is a Southern Baptist church. There's not any mixing of cemeteries anywhere in this area."

Miss Wireman, who claims to have been subjected to taunts of "nigger-lover", said: "They just won't let her soul rest." At Whitney's funeral, the minister said she had "a free ticket to Heaven".

## Your chance to become a scriptwriter

The Times Screenwriting Competition 1996 aims to find Britain's up-and-coming talent and offers a first prize of an all-expenses-paid trip to Hollywood to pitch a script before key executives at major studios. To enter collect four of the six tokens which will be published over the next week. Your entry should be in English, typed and double-spaced on A4 paper and in the following form: a) a 100-word précis which sells your film script and includes the title b) a treatment of not more than 750 words incorporating the story, characters, structure and genre, together with your name, address, and daytime telephone number at the top of the first sheet, and c) three consecutive sample scenes submitted on a minimum of two A4 pages. Send your entry to: The Times Screenwriting Competition 1996, PO Box 510, Leighton Buzzard, Bedfordshire LU7 8QS. Closing date May 9, 1996. Full terms and conditions appeared in yesterday's paper.





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There's more to the Dubai World Cup than the world's richest horse race, says Clement Freud, still reeling from his trip

## The mother of all freebies

About 20 years ago I was one of a parliamentary delegation to Japan. When we arrived in Tokyo, a man from our Embassy briefed us: you are guests of the Nippon Government who will pay for everything — except overseas phone calls and drinks not taken with meals.

A colleague suggested we have dinner in the hotel restaurant and when the wine list was brought he said "Drinks with meals are on them, right?" I said yes.

He ordered a bottle of Lafite 1953. I was a newish MP, he a Conservative former minister. I was astounded. He said I was being foolish: "The more we cost them, the greater the respect they will have for us; you will learn."

In the course of my five terms in Parliament (Heath, Wilson, Callaghan, Thatcher, Thatcher) no one ever offered me money to do anything dishonourable — Liberals were not considered sufficiently important to merit bribes — but I went on about a dozen "freebies": departed Westminster

stocked with House of Commons gift-shop cufflinks and ashtrays and returned with expressions of our hosts' friendship, usually in the form of ashtrays and cufflinks. It was harmless and pointless. The reasoning was that the Togolese knew they would not be invited to visit Britain unless they invited us to come to Lomé. So we went — expenses paid except for drinks, laundry and overseas phone calls.

I still have a silvery lapel pin depicting the President of that largely forgotten country, where I hope they still cherish my cufflinks.

In Finland the House of Commons ties and scarves got us each a hunting knife, a tin of ptarmigan pâté, some cloudberry liqueur and a mounted street map of Helsinki.

They asked us to table an early day motion: that this House

regrets the diminution of Scandinavian pulp imports.

Last Sunday I arrived in the United Arab Emirates as a guest of the committee of the Dubai World Cup: the richest horse race ever run, prize money \$4 million.

I had been sent a Club-class ticket: on arrival there was a stretch limo to the hotel. In my room I found a letter welcoming me to the event,

explaining that all phone calls, food and drink and laundry and dry cleaning were on them. Cars and buses would be available to and from race track and functions;



Sheikh Mohammed hands the trophy to owner Allen Paulsen

enclosed was an enamelled silver badge inscribed "VIP Dubai World Cup" for my binoculars.

There was an invitation to dinner and a rock concert on

Monday, to an Arabian Nights extravaganza in the desert on Tuesday, to the post-race banquet on Wednesday, and an embossed, multi-pocketed briefcase and a stunning heavy silk dishdash with embroidered skull cap and black braids in case I wanted to go native.

The next day they sent me a T-shirt, a hat, a leather cover for my passport, a handsome notebook and I nearly got a basket of fruit that ended up in the room opposite.

With the exception of D. Skin-

ner, MP, who never goes on freebies, shuns the Commons tea room because it is subsidised and travels in standard carriages on his first-class rail pass, the *modus vivendi* of most of my political and journalistic colleagues embraces an element of prostitution. The hack whose response to the welcoming letter in Dubai was to ring his wife and ask her to Federal Express the washing, cash on delivery, was an extreme case but I have no right to criticise: "We've already established what you are now," we're haggling about the price," sums it up.

The first running of the Dubai World Cup was a brilliant affair and the hundreds of guests who had been so lavishly softened up were now served molluscs and crustaceans, smoked fish and baked meats, puddings and *grande marque* champagne (if one

were hellbent on criticism, the caviare was not up to much).

Had it rained, had there been a false start, a steward's inquiry resulting in disqualification, a riot, fatality, outbreak of camel disease or beriberi, not one of us would have had the bad manners to bring such a matter to the attention of our readers. Damn it, there has to be a degree of give and take... and we had taken.

Skinner — who rather enjoys racing — would have accepted none of the proffered gifts, paid his own fares and found fault with nothing, for it was wonderfully well done and the Sheikh's thinking was probably on the lines of "I shall organise the richest race in the world; let it be in front of the most cosseted hacks and VIPs ever assembled". What can one say? Long live Sheikh Mohammed. May his people prosper, I had a good time and got my suit dry-cleaned. It was the mother of freebies. Thank you. I still feel a bit uneasy.

STEPHEN DALTON

## Faith, hope and the Darwin man

Richard Dawkins argues in his new book that all living things owe their design not to God but to evolution. He explains why to Quentin Letts

Taking his DNA into his own hands, the Darwinist proselytiser Richard Dawkins this week left his nest at New College, Oxford, and flew to the United States for a two-week lecture tour. The science author's itinerary includes California, Illinois and Georgia. More awkward, he will also be speaking in Tennessee, site of the 1925 "Monkey Trial" of a biology teacher called John Scopes who was charged with illegally teaching the theory of evolution to his pupils.

Seventy-one years on, Tennessee is again split by the issue. Dawkins, 55, is heading there just as a state senator, David Fowler of Chattanooga, is agitating for a Bill to allow schools to fire teachers who present Darwinism as fact. They do so at the expense of

the creationist belief that God made Earth in one bound. Dawkins, the soft-spoken, un conventionally handsome Oxford don, is dealing with an issue that goes to the jugular of American Christian conservatism.

From the fastness of a New Jersey country bungalow, where he was staying with friends before starting his tour, a jet-lagged Dawkins pondered the opposition his ideas may generate. It would not be the first time. His best-known books, *The Selfish Gene* and *The Blind Watchmaker*, have wounded Christians and drawn accusations from opponents that he is a "complete creep" and a "fundamentalist" against religion. Some of this can be put down to academic envy of the success of his books and his media profile, but anyone who

puts a suction pump to the spiritual well of society, especially a society in desperate need of morality, must come in for scrutiny.

Dawkins's new book is called *Climbing Mount Improbable*, a poetic cadence somehow suggestive of Lake Wobegone. Garrison Keillor's distant hill country where the men are strong and the women steadfast. Dawkins chose the title from a line in his 1991 Royal Institution Christmas Lecture for Children, when the metaphor of a plaster-of-Paris model. On one side of the plaster mountain was a steep precipice, on the other an undulating slope, while on the peak sat a replica of a complete organism.

The steep side was meant to reflect the creationist point of view. The gentle slope was

evolution," explained Dawkins. "You can get up a mountain, no matter how high, provided you take the gentle slope. It is impossible the other way — even though that is what the creationists would have us believe."

The new book is a further exposition of his Darwinist ideas, written again in a cool, clear prose understandable even to scientific nincom-

poops. There is work on the evolution of the eye, an organ considered by scientists to be the temple of biological achievement but which has long been a favourite of creationists. Until now they have used it in their "now try explaining your way out of that one" arguments. Elsewhere in his research Dawkins and a computer scientist collaborated to make a spider's web and snail shells. It is an odd thing to meet a man who truly has no belief in God, no hope of an afterlife or of divine remission for good behaviour. Yet Dawkins is polite, and happy to accept that it makes social sense for man to live within rules and behave in a civil fashion.

"One of the messages of *The Selfish Gene* was that we should learn about Darwinism because it is so horrible," he says. He does not go to church, nor does he pray, yet he retains an appreciation for beauty and is awed, in a very human way, when he tries to ponder infinity, the bounds of the universe. "It is one of the respects in which science is good for the soul," he says. "I use soul in a poetic way, in the sense of awe and mystery, the sort of thing that causes a tingling in the spine. But I do not believe there is anything apart from the brain."

Some of the past controversy has occurred because this shy scientist delivers his beliefs with cold clarity. When Dawkins states his disbelief in the miracle of divine creation he does not preface his remarks with a "look, I'm awfully sorry if this upsets you". His background as an Oxford don has instilled in him a reliance on verbal concision and intellectual tension. To those of us in the cheap seats it may seem brutal, but to Dawkins it is simply the way things are done: nothing personal, even if it threatens a world in which we can only apply to God to make sense of Dunblane, a world sometimes so harsh that many of us need faith to continue.

In his youth Dawkins had religious feelings ("of course"), but in his early teens, as he

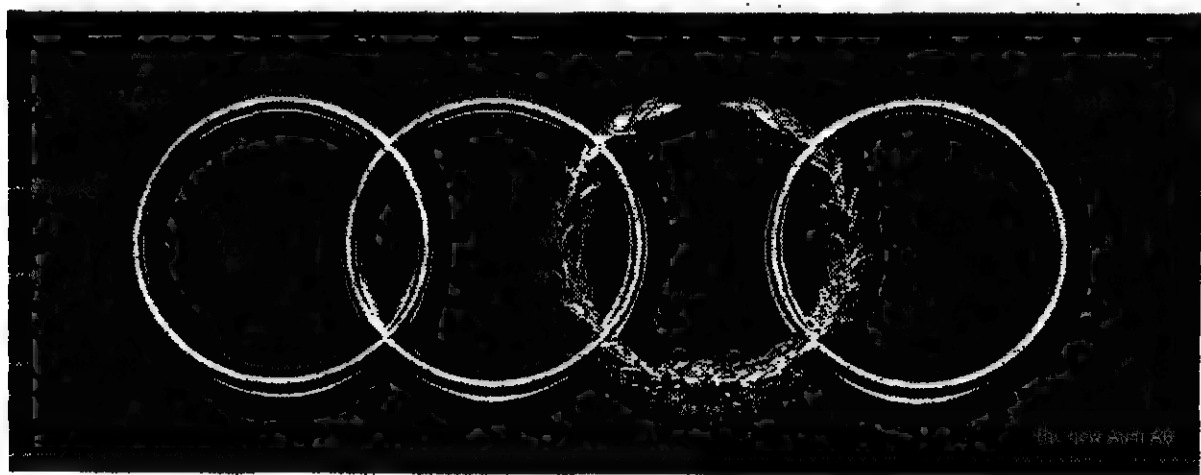
busied himself in the science labs at Oundle, he started to exercise a curiosity in the philosophical side of biology. By his second year at Balliol this had started to evolve. If that is the term, into his belief that all creatures descend from a single ancestor which existed three and a half billion years ago.

It is the sort of creed that can land you in court in Tennessee. "In biology we are now back to the first self-replicating molecule," he says. "We understand in principle what happened, although the physicists are still wrestling over how we got a universe at all. We are just that tiny fraction of a second away from the first moment." Perhaps that fraction of a second was when the Almighty made

His move. I suggest, mentally holding aloft a copy of *Hymns Ancient and Modern*. "I don't find it a convincing line of thought," he says calmly. "It raises more questions than answers. The whole point of Mount Improbable is that you cannot have a spontaneous creation of complex organisms."

The night before we met, comet Hyakutake had passed overhead, the brightest to zoom past Earth in 20 years. Dawkins watched it from a New Jersey field, and the following day was still excited by the experience. Comets are the very stuff of his world, visible proof of an extraterrestrial power that can be plotted and predicted, but which remains without our grasp. In *Climbing Mount Improbable* Dawkins describes how, when Halley's comet last passed in the Eighties, he took his two-year-old daughter Juliet out in the midnight dark to point her face at the comet's dim glow.

Into the bundle's baby-soft ear, still warm from the cot, the doting father whispered, on a "quixotic whim", what it was that Juliet saw: a comet that would next sweep past in the middle of the 21st century, when he would be long dead but when she might still be alive, an old woman, to view it a second time and thus continue the Dawkins line. In that one moment, for all his clinical analysis, an avowed heathen showed that at heart he is really a big old softie.



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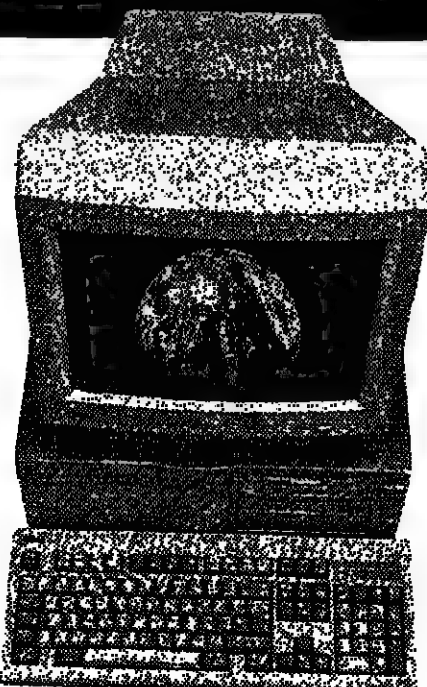
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# Grand old Dukie says goodbye to the box

**A**fter ten years in which he fought to bring the BBC up to date, Marmaduke Hussey today gives up the job of chairman



THE VALERIE GROVE INTERVIEW

DUKIE'S BOX is no more. Terry Wogan's long-running joke about the BBC chairman living in a cardboard box outside Broadcasting House culminated this winter in Dukie giving a large box to be auctioned for Children in Need. A lady named Judy Stapleton stumped up £3,000 for it, and last Friday, a demob-happy Marmaduke Hussey gave a breakfast for her and Wogan.

It was only at the BBC that Dukie — named for an uncle killed on the Somme — became Marmaduke. "I'd never been Marmaduke in my life. I'm rather attached to it now; can't think why I waited until I was 63. My wife says people think it's halfway between a duke and a marquess."

His wife, Lady Susan, fifth daughter of the late Earl Waldegrave and elder sister to

neither to me than that chair". From Oxford he joined the management of Associated Newspapers — "I thought the Daily Mail would be rather fun" — and then of The Times, ensuring a life of constant strife for a man of his invincible type: officer class, decent sort, doughy survivor.

"Behind the scenes," he says, "there was a close affinity between myself and Len Murray, and Vic Feather. Senior trade union officials were very disturbed by the antics of the print unions. And I wasn't a giver-in." Hence the year's closure of The Times titles in 1979, an extreme ploy that frankly did not work. "The Thomson Organisation was never solidly behind it. If Roy [Thomson] had been there, it would have been different. Just before he died he said, 'Bring that new technology in, Duke'."

"The turning point was when we went to Frankfurt and The Times was set in two-and-a-half hours by five ladies in a Turkish printing outfit. It really rattled the unions. It proved it could be done. After that it was downhill all the way."

There were earlier plans that failed: such as merging the Express and Mail. "Historically, they were all efforts to break the deadlock. But they made it clear that something much more violent would be needed. It couldn't be done in a decent way, it had to be done in a rough way. And it was very rough indeed. But I told Rupert [Murdoch], 'Once you get lorries through Wapping with the papers printed, you've won. It may take a couple of months.' Of course, he got there in one night."

**F**leet Street confrontations would erupt in the middle of the night when the press would stop and the Husseys' telephone would ring at home "and Sue and I would scramble across the bed to get to it first... frightful. A very good training for the calm, easy world of the BBC."

When he had the call from Douglas Hurd in 1986, to chair the BBC, he first consulted the telephone book to find out where his office would be, and insisted on keeping his HQ in Portland Place.

The BBC's very existence was under threat. He told them that they must bring in outsiders. "And that in return for an income of £1.6 billion, which Margaret Thatcher claimed was a compulsory levy enforced by criminal

sanctions — I said, 'Well, Prime Minister, it is paid uncompromisingly by the British public, 93 per cent of whom watch or listen to our products every week' — we were obliged to offer something distinctive." He feels "rather conceited" that as an outsider he was more aware of the onslaught of satellite and cable than BBC senior executives, who had enjoyed a monopoly for 40 years and a cosy duopoly for 20. "They found themselves bang in the middle of a multi-national competitive business." The BBC was still pervaded by an academic, Civil Service ethos — "every-



When Marmaduke Hussey arrived at the BBC everyone was known by their initials

ment — 'let us see the script, Dukie.' — and I flatly refused. So it ended up in court; they got an injunction, later lifted, and we transmitted the programmes unchanged. People in my position shouldn't impose editorial views."

**N**ow the charter battle is won, a good moment to bow out. "We have made great strides and taught the BBC to be accountable. It's in exceptionally good nick now, riding high, more outward-looking. The digital revolution is coming, and so is the 24-hour news service."

Instead of endless dinners ("I am out every single night"), he will spend more time in Somerset, among Rees-Mogg, Waldegrave, Bookers and family; a fifth grandchild has just arrived. He may write a book; he is mastering his new laptop just in case. "I've got lots of papers — and I suppose, in a way, I've had quite an interesting life."

## Times writers report from the BSE front line It's a war out there

IN A strange way this week has been a little like the war. In fact, my mother said she couldn't recall scenes like it since rationing. Women with bare shopping baskets scanning the shelves of supermarkets for something they could turn into a healthy meal for their families.

It started on Monday with a call from my friend Sarah asking if I wanted to join a group of her friends who were getting together for their own organic meat run from "this marvellous little man in Wiltshire".

On Tuesday she rang me again to offer me the latest intelligence. "Holland & Barrett," she exclaimed. "Non-beef gelatin. But you'd better get down there quick because they are running out."

Almost all my friends have been overcome by what you might call the Dunkirk spirit. Caroline came round for tea with five dozen home-baked digestive biscuits and Juliet faxed me the number of an organic market gardener who delivers to W4.

By Thursday the crisis had deepened. Sarah rang with the latest local directive — don't touch the lamb because The Sunday Times had suggested that it might be contaminated, and on no account buy anything other than free-range chicken.

In Sainsbury's that afternoon I stocked up on the kind of imported products that, in

previous weeks, would have seemed unpatriotic. My mother's generation was known for keeping the home fires burning; my own, at least now, is fuelling the overseas economy.

In the fruit and veg aisle I bumped trolleys with a harassed looking Juliet who was staring suspiciously at the small organic selection. "You can't trust anyone," she whispered. "I mean if they're putting beef extract in fruit gums, apple juice and digestive biscuits, what else are they doing?"

By now I had been infected with a similar hysteria, searching out the Vegetarian Society's "V" of approval.

Later, my mother told me that in the war when you couldn't get beef suet they had all sorts of cunning substitutes. "My aunt used to have a recipe for Christmas pudding made out of wood shavings," she said.

My father's advice was rather more cynical. "You could try whale meat. We had a lot of that when we couldn't get beef."

Privately I wondered if the Save the Whale generation could stomach the idea of whale meat, even if it was free-range. In fact, I am seriously beginning to wonder if there is anything left that my family can stomach.

"Never mind," my father said, "maybe the Germans will send us food parcels."

JANE GORDON

UP AND DOWN the land, dinner parties are in disarray and experts on social etiquette are in a quandary. There seems no easy solution to the agonising dilemma: to serve or not to serve beef? Time for a letter to an agony aunt...

Dear Mary, We are having a rather smart dinner party next week. Henry's boss is coming and we've asked the local grande dame, who is an absolute stickler for etiquette, so we have to impress them. Ages ago, I ordered some best sirloin from our butcher because I'm going to make *boeuf en croûte*, my speciality. Henry says it's not so much my speciality as the only thing I can cook, but he's exaggerating. Anyway, it's cost us an arm and a leg, or should I say a shoulder, ha ha, and I can't really cancel it. What's more, Henry's boss has strong views about what he calls these nonsensical food scares and Henry thinks there will be a lot of brownie points if we show solidarity with beef.

But I'm worried about the other guests. It could be bad form to insist they eat something that might consign them to a slow death. So

## To serve or not to serve beef?

what do we do? My chicken *provençale* was an absolute disaster last time. Yours, Distressed of Woking

Dear Distressed, There are several possibilities. You could ring your guests in advance and ask if they have any special dietary requirements, referring with a light laugh to the possibility that you might even serve beef, then try to judge whether there is panic in their voices. If there is, then on the night in question you discreetly offer those guests a salad, causing them maximum embarrassment.

On the other hand, you could announce that you've nobly sacrificed your *boeuf en croûte* in the interests of social responsibility but cannot answer for the chicken

*provençale* — then, in a neat piece of one-upmanship, tell Henry's boss that you've prepared one portion of beef just for him. The only risk here is that he might interpret it as an attempt to kill him.

I think the best approach is to cook both — beef and chicken — then announce that you have no qualms about serving beef from a good butcher, but that since some people are genuinely worried, you have an alternative in reserve. Try to indicate subtly that the chicken is very much second best (which it is). My bet is that no one will want to seem wimpy and they will all go for the beef.

Yours, Mary

Faced with something like that scenario last Monday, this is the solution we adopted. Mary was absolutely right. They all went for the beef — and rather enjoyed demonstrating their *sang-froid* in the face of another food scare.

So I am coining a new phrase for the etiquette book: "social machismo". It could be the hallmark of the late 20th century.

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## Philip Howard



### Politicians may strut — but they are not the real movers and shakers

The movers and shakers have flocked like pigeons to the handsome old city of Turin for their inter-governmental conference. Jim Naughtie will almost certainly refer to them on the *Today* programme, with a touch of pawky sarcasm, as movers and shakers. And we may reflect through the shaving-soap that m. and s. are not what they used to be in the days when the leaders of governments were giants whose faces and voices were recognisable. This modern assembly of grey men in grey suits consists of anonymous movers and quakers.

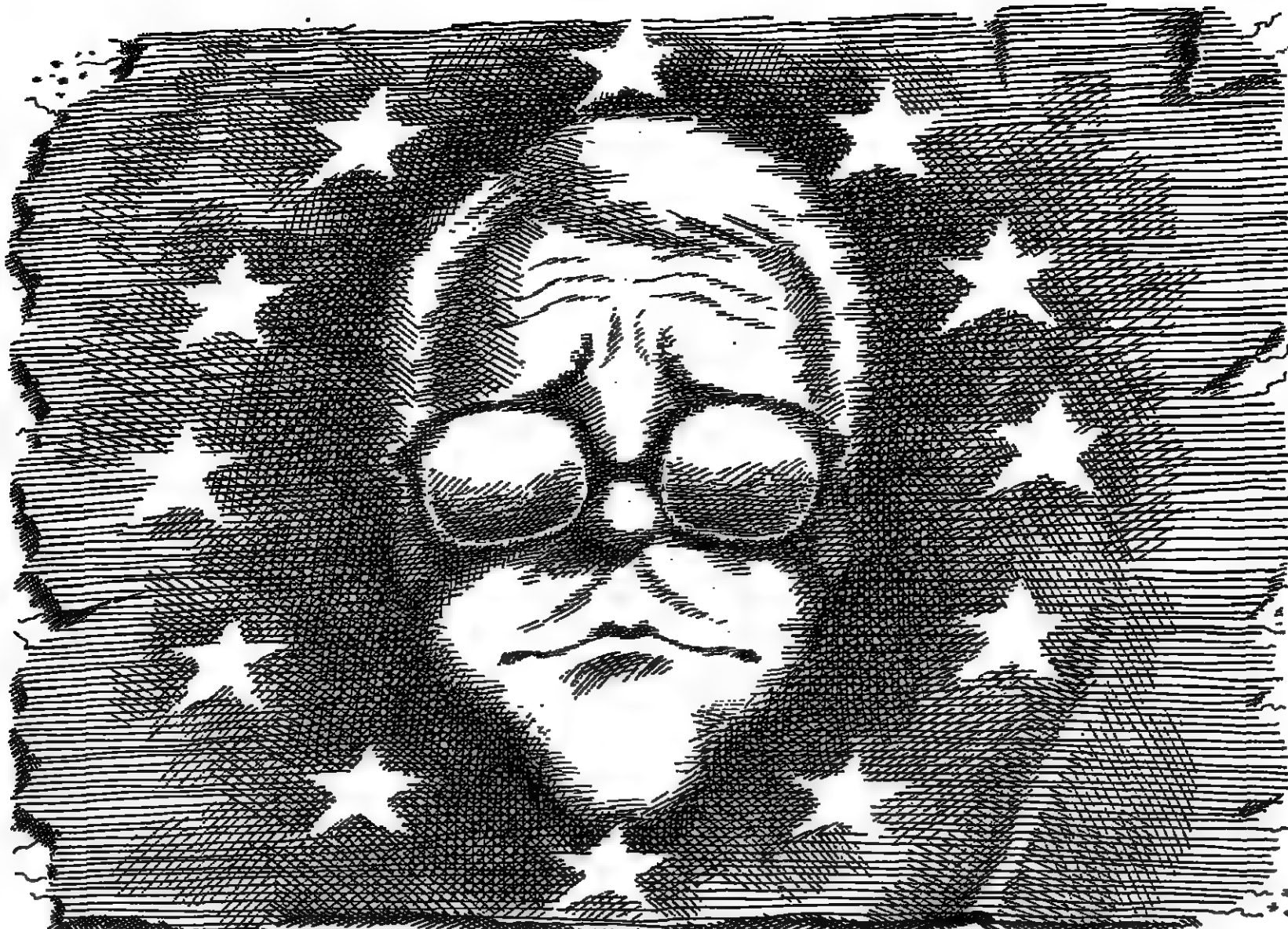
"Movers and shakers" has become so fashionable a cliché that it scores more than a thousand references in the British national press database for the past year. They can be found in every activity from international statesmanship to English cricket administration, Washington celebrity hostesses and concrete sculpture. Lists of movers and shakers proliferate, and those not on the A list of Oscar parties or the Whitehall file of great and good feel excluded and envious. And the joke is that the modern use is the exact opposite of the original meaning. Arthur O'Shaughnessy, the forgotten poet, was referring to music-makers and dreamers of dreams: "World-losers and world-forsakers. On whom the pale moon gleams! We are the movers and shakers! Of the world for ever, it seems." "It seems" is a weak ending, but necessary for the rhyme.

O'Shaughnessy, a ripide wet romantic and friend of Rossetti and other Pre-Raphaelites, was making the paradox that poets are the true legislators rather than the politicians who strut and tret their hour upon the screen and then become yesterday's men and Mr Whos. He was not making an original point. Hard-up poets have always pretended so, from Horace declaring that warlords such as Agamemnon are remembered only because of the bards who tell their story, to Hardy asserting that the old man harrowing duds and the maid and her wight (he sounded twice even then) had a longer shelf-life than Dynasties passing.

Within the past few years, the m. and s. sandwich has been grabbed and turned topsy-turvy. The process started, as with much new language, in American politics: "The rich movers and shakers always manage to manipulate the Congress for their own benefit and screw the rest of us." And from there movers and shakers have taken over the stock of common rhetoric on this side of the Atlantic, are becoming a laughing-stock, and, in the usual pattern, will soon die of shame. H.W. Fowler called such common errors "misapprehensions of which many writers need to disabuse themselves". Ones that are too recent to have incurred his rebuke are the delusion that *prevaricate* means to put off until *mañana* instead of to walk and thence to behave crookedly; and the belief that an unlevel playing field gives an advantage to one side. They change sides at half-time, and to play up a slight slope slows the ball down so that your wingers can run on to it. The classic misapprehension is that "one touch of Nature makes the whole world kin" means, roughly, that fellow-feeling makes us all kind to each other. But *Troilus and Cressida* is cynical, not sentimental, about politics and love. What Shakespeare meant was that a certain tendency is natural to us all, viz. fickleness.

O'Shaughnessy made himself an expert in herpetology at the British Museum, when he was not composing romantic poetry. Naturalists with zoological degrees were at first offended but then persuaded. Today he is remembered just for his verse about movers and shakers. And so he joins the select band of poets remembered for just one verse. Dean Burgon is another, with "A rose-red city, half as old as Time!" And he borrowed "half as old as Time" from Samuel Rogers.

Anti-Romantics mock O'Shaughnessy's *Movers and Shakers* as the ultimate in Victorian escapism, along with *Childe Roland to the Dark Tower Came*, *The Lady of Shalott*, Byron, Keats, Shelley, et al. Movers and shakers are misapprehended to butter up strutters on the epigrammatic stage. But music-makers are closer to real poetry than the too-clever verses of Pope, the poet for those who do not understand poetry.



ANOTHER TURIN SHIRKOID

## Saving Europe from itself

John Redwood accuses British diplomacy of ignoring the threat to peace and liberty posed by Franco-German federalism

The United Kingdom has often had to save Europe by her exertions. Today we must save Europe by our exhortations. The diplomatic establishment is unable to see the threat of European Union clearly enough. It does not find the words and deeds to rally other European countries to our cause. It must do so before it is too late.

It is far from reassuring to be told that "we are winning the argument" or that "Europe is going our way" when we face a summit after inter-governmental conference and paper after meeting where the Franco-German integrationist bandwagon rolls on. Chancellor Kohl makes no secret of his intentions. He wants monetary union. The price for that monetary union is political union. What can political union mean unless it means a centralised European state in the German federal image?

Germany wants one flag, one currency, one foreign policy, one set of border controls, one anthem, one Parliament, one economy and one social policy for Western Europe. Anyone else would call that one state. It is a clear vision. Some believe that it would make us more secure and more prosperous. If I thought that, I would find it very attractive. The trouble is that it is likely to cause the opposite: more insecurity, more rows and tensions, fewer jobs.

The case for monetary union has rarely been made in Britain. In Germany and France the case against it is treated as some kind of leprosy which the sceptical voters must be kept away from. We can see the strains that preparations for monetary union have already caused. A major diplomatic incident was sparked when Germany stated the obvious, that Italy would not qualify.

The dilemmas are lengthening across the Continent as economies are drawn out on the rack of overvalued currencies necessitated by the Maas-tricht treaty rules. The United Kingdom has a bitter experience of preparing for monetary union while she was in the exchange rate mechanism, the necessary precursor of a single currency according to the treaty.

The single currency would require higher taxation to pay subsidies to the poorer parts of the Union. Just as Britain recognises our obligations to help Northern Ireland in our currency union, so we would have to help

Brandenburg and northeastern France if we were in a currency union with them. It would cause unemployment. Parts of the Union would find the exchange rates and interest rates not to their liking but would be unable to do anything about it. Britain has a mighty dollar trade. When we were in the ERM this was damaged by too high an exchange rate against the dollar. The same could happen to us if we exchanged sterling for the euro.

If countries are to move to single foreign policies, single armies and common frontiers they have to feel part of one nation. West Germany unified with East Germany in a hurry. It was very expensive, raising West German taxes by 7.5 per cent of taxed incomes and causing a big rise in unemployment in East Germany.

It is possible that people put up with it because they are one nation. They share all but their recent history. They speak one language, they feel German. Trying to put France, Germany and even Britain together would have none of that natural sense of nationhood to fall back on. A sense of belonging matters. I will never feel loyalty to a government where Germany has the most powerful voice. Nor will I feel sufficiently European to accept the authority of a European flag and government over my loyalty to my country, the UK. I speak for many millions who feel the same about their countries. I resent the idea that belief in my country threatens the peace of Europe. Britain has no imperial ambitions in Europe and is not about to declare war on our neighbours.

We are told that Britain is being difficult by making these elementary points. We are told that Britain must not hold things up. We must not miss out. If I joined a club I would, of course, wish to enjoy the benefits of membership. I do not want to spend all my time in club meetings arguing about perpetual changes to the rules. It is those who are never satisfied with the arrangements that are disrupting it all, not

us who wish it to calm down and prove its worth as a friendly group of countries trading together. My worry is that the kind of Europe Herr Kohl wishes to create will be an unemployed and miserable Europe, where identity and nationhood will have been suppressed too much and there will be endless wrangles as a result. I do not want to live in a federal state with 30 or 40 unhappy Quebecs all trying to get out.

Nato has kept the peace in Western Europe for 50 years. There is no need to change the arrangements that have worked so well. There would be a danger in disrupting them, especially if it jeopardised US support. During the long hard years of the Cold War, US involvement was essential to the preservation of our freedom.

Today we see Russia trying the paths of democracy and peaceful intent. Let us hope it remains that way. There are now several nuclear weapons powers where once stood the Soviet Union. If any one of them turned to tyranny and became hostile to the West we could need the American nuclear umbrella again to guarantee our peace.

If we move too far in strengthening the Western European exclusive club the countries of the former Soviet Union could find that threatening. I do not think Western Europe would be safer for a defence merger of France and Germany. It would unbalance Europe. It would mark the failure of a long and honourable tradition of British foreign policy, to keep a balance of power on the Continent.

The big issue today is whether the European supreme court, the Court of Justice, is compatible with our vision of a free association of nation states. Are that Court's recent judgments a fair reflection of the treaty and the intentions of the members when they signed? I do not believe they are. We negotiated an opt-out to the social chapter in good faith, only to be told that the Court will override it. We passed an Act of Parliament to safeguard our fishing interests, only to be told that it counted for nothing. Parliament and the British

nation must awaken from their slumbers before it is too late. We must assert the rights of the UK to stand by our view of what we have agreed. Our right to self-government hinges upon the supremacy of Acts of Parliament. If law is to be handed down by unknown judges in a far-away court, we have lost our right of democratic redress.

Parliament is no stranger to struggles to uphold our liberties. In the 16th century, a simple Act of Parliament swept aside the jurisdiction of the Roman courts in England and Wales. Doubtless the equivalent of Foreign Office lawyers told the King it could not be done, it would violate European law. He did it and it worked.

In the 17th century, Charles I tried to rule without Parliament. The imposition of Ship Money caused a constitutional crisis. The King said he could raise it without parliamentary approval. Parliament disagreed, and eventually won in the Restoration settlement. Today a foreign court is levying its own kind of Ship Money, telling us that we have to pay compensation to Spanish fishermen from our taxation, whether Parliament wants to or not.

Our whole history is the history of expanding the franchise and increasing the rights of voters to a say in how they are governed through a sovereign Parliament. The growth of unelected power in the European institutions is a serious threat to our settled constitution. It must be arrested before it gets out of control.

We should stay in Europe for trade, for friendship, for co-operation. We must influence Europe for the better. We must rally all those who disagree with Chancellor Kohl's vision. We must speak for all those who wish to keep democratic self-government.

We must say that a single state forged out of the different languages, tempers, histories and cultures of the European peoples cannot work. We must show that there is a different and better way, a way that looks outward, thinks globally and welcomes the new technology that can keep us prosperous in a fast-changing world. A Euro-state with too much law and tax from Brussels would cut us off from the opportunities that the world and its dynamic changes offer. It is time for Britain to save Europe from itself.

John Redwood is Conservative MP for Wokingham.

## Blairites should be puritans

David Selbourne  
on Labour and the moral order

Given the scale of Britain's civic and social crisis — in education, in family breakdown, in personal isolation, in the forms of violence, in the mistaken dispersal of public institutions to the market — what kind of moral regime is required of an incoming Labour administration?

First, the recurring cycles of national ethical disgrace, media frenzy, heroic acts of dedication, the placing of flowers at the scene of crime and a return to moral relativism (and despair) signify that something is seriously wrong. The largest doubt here must be whether Labour's adopted notion of "stakeholding" — whatever it may mean — can restore our civic balance and redeem us as citizens.

Secondly, the rabble of moral relativists which crouches, vulture-like, upon the body politic, denying that right can properly be distinguished from wrong, is a greater presence among Labour's supporters than elsewhere in the political spectrum. Here, new Labour has a fight on its hands if it is to provide a sense of direction in the wilderness which has been made of our lives by vacuous doctrines of "opportunity" and "choice". In most ethical matters there cannot, in practice, be "choice". But if even the bishops of the atrophying Church of England think there must be, Labour is unlikely to be braver.

Thirdly, the liberal mind draws back from most morally necessary acts which require the curtailment of individual freedom. Yet Karl Popper, the greatest exponent of modern liberal thought, was in despair at his life's end over the corruption of the liberal ideal, even declaring himself trenchantly in favour of the censorship of television.

"We have need of liberty," he said in 1988, "in order to prevent the abuse by the State of its power, and we have need of the State to prevent the abuse of liberty." But the tide of television and video violence continues to rise above our nostrils, applauded on its way by comfortable moralists. Here the libertarian Right and Left occupy the same cul-de-sac, in which liberty is equated with unimpeded freedom of action. In consequence, both lose the right to criticise the anti-ethical behaviour of others. Free market fundamentalism, violent sacrilege against nature, and even royal self-destructiveness are all expressions of the same suicidal "free spirit" and individual entitlement which the libertarian camp wrongly thinks are synonymous with freedom. In this camp, and it is a large one, is also the great tribe of cynics and scoffers — many with access to the media — for whom any moral argument whatever is absurd, stiff-necked or "old-fashioned".

Fourthly, the most assiduous lobbyists in Labour's ranks continue to be more exercised about individual rights than individual duties. They are also generally unable to accept the concept of the "bad citizen", for fear of giving class offence. Connected with this is the disproportionate attention which they wish to see paid to minorities — and only to some minorities at that — rather than to the common civic good.

A Labour administration is going to have to break these spells if social peace and personal liberty are to be safeguarded. It is a puritan, or Roundhead, ethic which the nation needs, not soft toys left at the site of each act of violence while a helpless citizenry weeps.

Nor is such a puritan ethic compatible with a continuance of the fire sales of public institutions which hold the civic fabric together. Labour will have to put a stop to them and reverse those that can be reversed. It will have to be stern, too, in its encouragement and defence of the marriage bond.

In particular, civic obligation will have to be enforced, and the varieties of individual and civic irresponsibility will need to be better controlled by sanction. Labour will need to stand firm alike against duty-dodging parents, trouble-making tenants, work-avoiding claimants and the tax-evading rich, not so that illiberalism shall rule the land but so that the long, disastrous reign of dutiless right can be displaced by a social ethic. It is also important that civic benefit becomes more closely linked to civic conduct, that the scope of personal responsibilities be extended in law and that community service be increasingly made a title of access to civic goods. For citizenship is a matter of duty as well as of right. If Labour were to enforce this, then the lost idea of the civic order might begin to revive.

It should be noted by "the Left" that this political agenda is "progressive", being in the interests of all: the peddling of an indiscriminate politics of rights and more rights — the politics of Charter 88 and other lobbies — benefits the few while imperilling the future.

For civic society requires above all to be protected, as the massacre of Dunblane shows: the "right" to carry a gun stands at the opposite pole to that of public interest. But so also do many other rights in societies which have lost their moral bearings, their respect for the other (and for nature) and the capacity to distinguish between the better and the worse. It is time, rather, for a generalised politics of civic and personal responsibility which is sustained by sanction, so that the moral order can be restored — and it looks as if it will fall to Labour to attempt it.

David Selbourne is the author of *The Principle of Duty*.

## No sweat

SOMETHING is afoot among Parliament's marathon runners. Most years, you can rely on eight or nine MPs pulling on their trainers for the London Marathon, to take place next month. This year, they are down to one.

Excuses range from slipped discs and sciatica to pressure of work. Sceptics say the party whips are terrified of any MP keeling over and forcing a by-election. Robin Cook and Clare Short head the list of cop-outs. In January, they appeared outside the Houses of Parliament in their running togs, encouraging over-fities to run the marathon. Now Miss Short's office tells me the all-smoking, all-drinking Shadow Transport Secretary has been too busy to train. Cook's staff say their man never really planned to go the full 26 miles himself but, in true Labour fashion, was keen for others to do so.

Of the other regulars, Doug Henderson, Labour MP for Newcastle upon Tyne North, pleads a sports injury. Alistair Burt, Conservative MP for Bury North, has his eye on the New York Marathon instead. Jerry Hayes, Conservative MP for Harlow, has slipped a disc, while Gary

Waller, Conservative MP for Keighley, claims "a spot of back trouble after an operation and some ill-advised squash" has stymied his run. Alun Michael, Labour MP for Cardiff South, goes for the Short excuse of a heavy workload. Which leaves John "the carbo-loader" Austin-Walker, Labour MP for Woolwich. The marathon passes



Robin Cook and Clare Short among this year's non-starters

through his constituency and although he has not put in the requisite hours of street-pounding, he does expect to finish.

● In Buckinghamshire, a mad pub scare. The Red Cow in Woodburn Green, a 14th-century coaching inn, has changed its name to the Mad Cow. "No one knows why the pub is called the Red Cow," says Chris Ashton, the landlord, "so in 400 years time folk will have no idea why it's the Mad Cow."

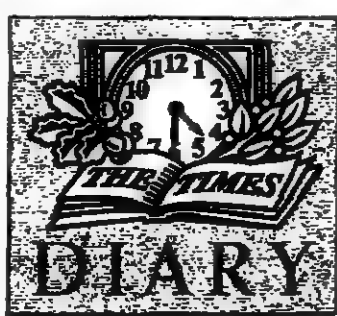
### Lost the plot

NEWS THAT the Ritz is trying to buy the house next door for expansion brings to mind the hotel's failed attempt early this century to snap up Wimborne House.

The hotel wrote to Lord Wimborne to ask if he wished to sell. "Not on your life," he replied. "But if the Ritz is interested in selling, I would like to extend my garden."

### Spice is nice

MY STORIES of late-light curry takeaways at Buckingham Palace and pie deliveries to Kensington Palace have encouraged a new fan of spicy food from the tandoori. Pamela Anderson, the bottle-blondie so beloved of my tabloid



brethren, features large in the latest edition of *Tandoori News*. We are talking takeover Hollywood style for the woman who visited Britain last Christmas. "I don't know any decent curry places in LA, so I'll have to fly a curry chef over from the UK to make me my favourite chicken vindaloo."

### Hurd-hearted

THERE will be poignant moments in Turin at the inter-governmental conference for Susanna Agnelli, the deconous 73-year-old Italian Foreign Minister. In her heart, she will be thinking of the days when Douglas Hurd was her British counterpart — she fell for his bookish charm and, frankly, Malcolm Rifkind does not have the same appeal.

Susanna, a forceful figure who

writes an agony column every week in the magazine *Oggi*, is the sister of Fiat magnate Gianni Agnelli. She would make a beeline for Hurd at every opportunity when they were on the diplomatic circuit, and the couple once enjoyed a rendezvous in a romantic garden in Italy.

"She was bowled over by him when she came over to London for a special meeting on Turkey," says a diplomat. "Hurd loves Italy, speaks the language fluently and still visits every year."

### Royal beef

THE QUEEN has pulled on her wellies to muck in on the beef crisis. On hearing of the potential problem during her weekly chat with John Major the day before Stephen Dorrell, the Health Secretary, made his doom-laden announcement, the countrywoman in her came to the fore.

"She was consumed with concern, and promptly offered to telephone round her blue-chip friends in Europe to see if they could help," says a source. "Country matters are what she really understands."

### Young blade

PRINCE EDWARD, always the



"In tomorrow's field he stands a chance of winning"

most modish of the Queen's brood, advised on modern trends on Wednesday night. With Sophie Rhys-Jones at his side, he was at the 5,000th performance of *Starlight Express*, the musical on roller-skates on which he worked five years ago for Sir Andrew Lloyd Webber's Really Useful Group.

"When it first opened it was a show of the pop music of the time and it has adapted and changed to keep up with the times," he explained. "I think rollerblades would be a good idea now."

P.H.S





## THE VIEW FROM TURIN

Italy's troubles have converted it to a more flexible EU

The official purpose of today's short summit in Turin is to launch the European Union's inter-governmental conference (IGC), which is supposed to review and improve upon the Maastricht treaty. The EU's leaders meet in a political vacuum: five out of six Europeans have never heard of this project, and fewer still see much point to further institutional tinkering. They will not be greatly enlightened by today's proceedings. They will be brief; to the irritation of the Germans and the disappointment of the anxious Italian hosts, they are unlikely to be to the point. John Major's main concern will be to be seen by his domestic audience to be reading the riot act about "unjustified" curbs on British beef; Jacques Chirac, who has his own domestic troubles, will be out to demonstrate to France's unemployed that the EU is — or ought to be — a vehicle for job creation.

For all these reasons, there will be no serious debate at Turin about the Union's future. Yet it would be a mistake to see this meeting as inconsequential. Historical shifts are not always visible at the time; and the agenda for the IGC drawn up by Italy could open up routes to the more flexible, multi-dimensional EU for which Britain has long argued. That is not because Italy has lost its enthusiasm for Europe, but because — given that Italy will not meet the criteria for monetary union in 1999 — it is determined to resist Germany's concept of a European "inner core", from which it risks being excluded.

Accordingly, the Italians are converts to the view that, particularly in an enlarged EU, the willingness and ability of countries to harmonise their policies will not always coincide — and that each country should therefore be free to decide if, how and when to co-operate more closely in new domains of policy. This, Italian diplomats say, would allow early enlargement without putting a brake on countries that wanted to move towards "deeper integration".

Such talk will be music to Mr Major's ears. But it does not necessarily imply a minimalist agenda for the EU. If monetary union, Schengen and the Franco-German brigade are taken as precedents for "diversity", the argument could be used — as it probably will be by Germany — to put pressure on Britain not to block the development of common foreign, security and interior policies of which it did not want to be part. Britain may be winning the argument that the Union cannot advance at the same pace, or always in the same direction; but as this is more generally accepted, it will find it harder to resist the use of EU institutions for policies pursued only by small groups of countries.

Diversity could, in addition, easily become a repackaging of the "inner core" favoured by Wolfgang Schäuble, the prominent German Christian Democrat. He gave a taste of that yesterday when he spoke of an EU avant garde. Here, however, Mr Major will not be in a minority of one; he will have Italian support for a multi-dimensional EU, in which small groups of countries form closer links in some areas, where this matches their national interest.

These negotiations will last for at least 15 months. Nothing is clear yet. But in the words of Boris Biancheri, the head of the Italian Foreign Office, Turin could be the moment when EU Governments start "to conceive a Europe that is different from the one we have been living with, in which diversity is preserved". Such a Europe could more easily accommodate the countries of Central Europe, which have no wish to forfeit sovereign freedoms only recently regained. Britain has cards to play and much at stake. If it plays them well, this multi-dimensional Europe could be one in which the British can feel more at ease than they have since 1991, when the Maastricht treaty was signed in a rush of federalist enthusiasm which this country could not, and cannot, share.

## CHILDREN FIRST

Good sense on adoption — but it has been a long wait

In November 1993, Virginia Bottomley published a White Paper on adoption, which tried to bring some common sense back to a process that had, in some local authorities, been perverted by political correctness. The paper stated the fact (hardly controversial, one might have thought) that the happiness and welfare of the child and the loving intentions of the adoptive parents were more important considerations than the age, colour or weight of the couple concerned.

At the time, we welcomed her proposals. It then took two-and-a-half years for an Adoption Bill to be introduced. Published yesterday, it is a broadly technical piece of legislation designed primarily to streamline step-parent and overseas adoptions and to strengthen in some areas the birth mother's rights. As under the Children Act, courts will take all their decisions with the interests of the child as paramount.

What then about those important matters of age and skin colour? These are set out in a circular to all directors of social services from their chief inspector. A fine document it is. It argues that adoption should be seen as a positive step for some children, not as a last resort. It stresses that older prospective adoptive parents may have as much, or more, to offer as younger ones. It derides the inverted snobbery of some social workers who have turned down couples for being too well educated or too rich. And it argues that, where adoptive parents cannot be found who share the ethnic or religious origins of a child, other couples should be considered.

This is all highly sensible. In some societies, after all, grandparents do all the child-rearing while parents go out to work; age is

no necessary disqualification for bringing up children. More couples in Britain are having children naturally in their early forties, at an age which would disqualify them from adopting. Many couples do not discover until their late thirties that they are incapable of conceiving children; it piles unfairness upon bad luck to tell them that they are also too old to adopt.

Race and religion are trickier matters. The circular is right to conclude that, other things being equal, children should be placed with similar parents. But when other things are not equal, it must often be better for them to join a different-coloured family than to languish in a children's home or in foster care. What children need most is permanent love and affection — and local authority care, however well intentioned the carers, does not provide that.

The same is true of adoptions from overseas. Too many local authorities have insisted upon parents having connections with the country of origin before being allowed to adopt a foreign child. If the choice is between living in an orphanage or growing up in a loving British family, the latter is surely preferable.

Why has the Department of Health taken so long to say all this? The excuse was not that it needed to be incorporated into law, for none of these arguments is contained in the Adoption Bill. At last now, parents trying to adopt will be armed with the chief inspector's recommendations. But those who have been struggling with local authorities for the past few years will not thank the department for having taken so long to draft and send out seven sheets of A4 paper.

## AYE, LINERS

The best voyages are journeys back in time

When Concorde brought the nations of the world, if not necessarily its British and French builders, so much closer to each other, the ascendancy of the aeroplane seemed assured. The Blue Riband became as obsolete a distinction as handiness with the plough when an aircraft could accomplish in hours what took a liner days. But the romance of the cruise, the salty tang on the lips, and not just from the briny, has ensured that sea travel survived. In order to compete with the convenience of the supersonic seat the cruise lines have had to innovate. Yet the modernity so eagerly embraced may crush the antique elegance which has allowed cruising to survive.

The *Splendour of the Seas*, whose launch today we preview on page six, may be making just that mistake. Her owners have abandoned the traditional and stately pleasures of cruising — quarts on the aft-deck, then a hand at piquet, a gin and French before eight courses at the captain's table — before eight courses of our times: a "Greek-style" solarium and aerobics floor, a "teen centre" designed to resemble "an MTV stage set", a "large writing wall for artistic expression" and the "King and I Dining Room" with 20ft walls of glass. This ship is no *Queen Mary*, more an ocean-going Duchess of York.

Oddest of all, the *Splendour of the Seas*, or *SOS* as she might more appropriately be called, boasts an 18-hole golf course. The course, christened *Splendour of the Greens*, comes complete with trees, bunkers, heather

and bronze golf gnomes. We have no objection to golf. Accountants have to have something to do at the weekends. And a sport at which either sex may excel and which suits the solitary or gregarious has obvious merits. But golf at sea is as unnatural as hunting in High Holborn. Moreover, putting past bronze gnomes while on a cruise liner is like drinking Lucozade in a distillery, or reading the *Beano* in the Bodleian: it is to forgo the sublime for the sake of the trivial.

Building an 18-hole golf course on a liner compels a certain admiration. The ingenuity of the naval architect can seldom have been so tested. But what a tragedy to see such skill channelled thus. One might as well have Henry Moore casting the bronze golf gnomes. How much better if the hands that fashioned the artificial heather around which the *Maxflies* must be steered had been set to bringing something of the Art Deco glory of the great Cunard liners to this vulgar vessel.

Turning cruise liners into Center Parcs at sea will only consign them to certain decline. When cruising, modern entertainments are an irritation, the port of call an irrelevance. The real voyage is back in time to a more spacious age where there was room enough to allow flirtations to flourish, hangovers to abate and honeymoons to, well, develop. The *SOS*'s owners should hurl every iron into the ocean and recognise that, on a cruise, the only glimpse of green should be the olive in the lunchtime Martini.

## Speaking up for law on blasphemy

From the Archbishop of York

Sir, In your report (March 26) of the challenge to the British law on blasphemy currently being presented in the European Court of Human Rights, Geoffrey Robertson, QC, is quoted as describing our present law as "anachronistic" and "discriminatory" against non-Christian faiths now practised in this country, and as saying that "blasphemy laws are the hallmark of primitive, not progressive, societies".

As it stands, our law on blasphemy is far from ideal. However, the fact that it has only been effectively invoked twice in 70 years hardly suggests that it constitutes a significant curtailment of freedom of expression. What its place on the statute book fundamentally signifies and signals is a general presumption in our society that there are things which are sacred and which should be treated with proper respect, and that the feelings of religious believers about what they hold sacred should not be outraged.

To abolish the law without replacing it would amount to a repudiation of that presumption, signalling a further weakening of the spiritual dimension in our sense of national identity. Any such development would be deplored and opposed not only by Christians but by many leaders and members of the non-Christian faiths in Britain.

There is a separate set of questions about whether the protection of the present blasphemy law should either be extended to other religious faiths or complemented by legislation relating to religious discrimination or incitement to religious hatred. These are important but also very complex issues. The Church of England remains keen to make a continuing positive contribution to the discussion.

Yours faithfully,  
DAVID EBOR  
Bishop of Exeter, York.  
March 28.

## Queen in Poland

From Mr Barry Hyman

Sir, I am surprised that the Queen, a woman of independent mind and vast experience, should need advisers to tell her that going to Poland without remembering three million Jewish Poles done to death by Nazism would be an affront to her own Jewish subjects.

Visiting a memorial (report and leading article, March 26) rather than Auschwitz was a late, small and barely adequate gesture; within 24 hours it was effectively nullified by the crass omission of the one sentence in her next speech to deal with the subject (report, March 27).

The Prince of Wales has gone on record as saying that he would like, as monarch, to be regarded as "Defender of Faith", implying all faiths. He has recently visited a Hindu temple and a mosque, fine gestures towards two minority faiths.

I worship at a Reform synagogue, where women enjoy equal rights; indeed our rabbi is a woman. If Prince Charles were to visit us, I could show him a community firm in its faith, while in complete dialogue with the modern world. That should appeal to his sense of spirituality.

Yours faithfully,  
BARRY HYMAN,  
4 Priory View,  
Bushy Heath, Hertfordshire.  
March 27.

## Active elderly

From Mr Richard Worsley

Sir, It should come as no surprise to the researchers for the Household Survey (report, March 27) that growing numbers of older people are active, independent and healthy. The importance of prolonging good health through an active mental and physical lifestyle and a balanced diet, and thus postponing dependence on others, has long been established, and people are clearly acting on it.

What we now need is a response from employers — by enabling those older people who want to work to make the contribution of which they are so clearly capable. The widespread exclusion of so many older people from work simply on grounds of age is an appalling waste of talent and experience and a missed opportunity for our society and economy.

Yours faithfully,  
RICHARD WORSLEY (Director),  
Carnegie Third Age Programme,  
3 Robert Street, WC2.  
March 27.

## Jobless data

From Mr James Bourlet

Sir, The Commons Employment Select Committee has concluded (report, Business, March 27) that the claimant count is an unsatisfactory measure of unemployment and that a monthly sample survey should be conducted to give a true picture of the labour market.

Precisely — and, as it happens, this is just what the 1944 White Paper on unemployment insisted was a prerequisite for success.

Yours faithfully,  
JAMES BOURLET  
(Honorary Secretary),  
Economic Research Council,  
239 Shaftesbury Avenue, WC2.

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN Telephone 0171-782 5000

### Danger of agricultural research cuts

From the President of the Institute of Biology

Sir, Public funding for agricultural research has suffered severe cutbacks in recent years and it would be irresponsible if we did not criticise their implications. The present crisis surrounding the scientific evidence to underwrite the safety of beef for the consumer highlights the need to do so.

Research establishments, already forced to contract substantially and greatly reduce the numbers of highly trained staff, are now faced with another round of damaging cuts and a second government review within 12 months. Not only does this reveal government indecision; it also shows an obsession with uprooting the tender plants of innovation in order to inspect the roots. It does little for the morale of our highly prized scientists, one of the great assets of our past successes and one which we squander at our peril.

New food and agricultural research programmes focus on how modern farming can be properly integrated into the wider environment. Bulging

food stores no longer exist in the EU, for instance, and world grain reserves are only enough to last for 48 days; rising standards of living in China and other countries have led to massive demands for grain to feed livestock; population pressures demand better methods of land management, pollution control and waste recycling; and increased global warming could result in droughts in parts of the world used to regular rainfall. All the signs are that we are moving into an era where food scarcity will be a defining issue.

It is certainly not the time to disperse our strengths in these areas of research. We welcome the initiative of the Food and Agriculture Organisation in Rome, who have recognised the potential dangers and called for a summit of world leaders in November to address the pressing issue of global food security for the next millennium.

Yours faithfully,  
F. ALAN HIBBERT, President,  
Institute of Biology,  
20-22 Queensberry Place, SW7.  
March 28.

### Structures for science

From Professor Sir Bernard Crossland, FRS, FEng

Sir, In a recent article, "Turning off the oxygen" (Education, March 8), the Principal of Unist expressed very real concern about the "process of attenuation — the so-called death by a thousand cuts" that is affecting the laboratories and workshops in most of our universities.

Though I recognise the great importance of analytic science, it does not and cannot replace the need for well considered and up-to-date laboratory work and the technician staff to support it. Such facilities are also needed to support research and are essential to attract industrially supported research.

Industry is hardly likely to support research unless there are well founded laboratories and workshops. However, it has to be admitted that well

founded laboratories and workshops and the associated technicians are very expensive, and they need to be utilised to the hilt.

This leads to my long-held view that it is necessary to condense down the number of universities with such facilities, to form a smaller number of technical universities, as are common on the Continent. For example, is it sensible or desirable that in Manchester there are four universities within a mile or two of one another, each with such facilities?

Would it not be much better if there was one major technical university, such as Aachen, which might also provide the stimulation for the industrial regeneration of the North West? A similar situation applies in many of our major cities.

Yours faithfully,  
BERNARD CROSSLAND,  
16 Malone Court, Belfast.  
March 27.

### Stemming BSE crisis

From Dr Helen Grant

Sir, On March 23, 1989, you printed a letter from myself and the late Professor William Blackwood warning of the possible hazard to their health of citizens of the UK being exposed to the potentially infective brains of cattle. That letter and my other warnings in the media early in 1989 finally persuaded the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food in November to bring in the "specified offals ban" to protect meat products from carrying the infective agent.

On May 27, 1994, you printed a letter in which I referred to the fact that a distinguished virologist, Dr Harsh Narang, who had been working with this micro-organism (the scrapie agent) for many years, had devised a test capable of revealing which apparently healthy sheep were incubating scrapie. Since then his test has also been successful in two human CJD sufferers. MAFF has for several years repeatedly declined to make use of this test to identify cattle which incubate BSE.

We are now faced with the possibility of a disastrous and large-scale slaughter policy to restore confidence in British beef. Using the Narang test on all cattle would identify the infected ones so that only those who would need to be destroyed. This simple, cheap and accurate test must be put to immediate use.

Yours faithfully,  
H. C. GRANT  
(Neuropathologist),  
63 Mount Vernon Road,  
Liberton, Edinburgh 16.  
March 28.

From Mrs Janet Graham

Sir, Three cheers for Sir Simon Courlay. In his letter to you today he advocates the setting up of a totally independent food and drug agency to handle all matters connected with food standards and food safety.

The National Consumer Council (of which I was then vice-chairman), along with other consumer organisations, made this recommendation to Government in 1989, in the wake of the original problem with BSE. BSE may be the most serious food

scare of recent years because it cannot be defined, but with modern food technology moving so fast there could well be others in the future. Consumers require independent advice at such a time and such an agency could well pre-empt some scares.

Yours faithfully,  
JANET GRAHAM,  
Wickham Farm,  
Sharpshorne, Sussex.  
March 27.

From Sir John Boynton

Sir, As chief executive of the county council I was involved in the foot-and-mouth epidemic in Cheshire in the 1960s when thousands of cattle were slaughtered. I am incredulous when responsible people talk lightly of culling a few million cattle.

Dairy farmers know many of their cows by name. The destruction of whole herds in Cheshire was devastating. It affected life in the county at every turn. It wounded the spirit of the farming community as well as creating huge logistical problems.

Yours faithfully,  
JOHN BOYNTON,  
1b Oakhill Avenue, NW3.  
March 27.

From Mrs C. M. Priestley

Sir, Nigella Lawson today claims that we are all free to eat what we choose. Your illustration showing that Walker's beef and onion-flavour crisps contain no beef products at all says more about our lack of choice than even the shocking discovery of what lies hidden inside a ginger-nut biscuit.

Yours faithfully,  
CHRISTINE PRIESTLEY,  
108a Cambridge Street, SW1.  
March 27.

From Mr C. Toby Stroh

Sir, We now have a stakeholder economy. Was Tony Blair prescient or dyslexic?

Yours faithfully,  
C. TOBY STROH,  
East Lodge,  
Grove Lane,  
Orchard Leigh,  
Nr Chesham, Buckinghamshire.  
March 26.

clever but mechanistic scheme which produces a tariff to be used by admissions' tutors is that it may encourage them to place less reliance on the school report.

Whatever the improvements introduced by Ucas, they must not be seen as a substitute for the introduction of a system which leaves applications until after A-level results are known (post-qualification applications). Predicted A-level grades are a poor alternative to actual results as a basis for allocating university places.

Yours faithfully,  
V. S. ANTHONY, Secretary,  
HMC, 130 Regent Road, Leicester.  
March 25.

Business letters, page 29

Letters should carry a daytime telephone number. They may be faxed to 0171-782-5046.

### RSPCA's role in animal welfare

From Mr Michael Sissons

Sir, My *Country Life* article on the RSPCA (report and leading article, March 28) was in the main concerned to show how the clothes of animal welfare have been stolen by activists for animal rights to gain effective control of the charity. No amount of banging on about "blood sports" on their part will now obscure that. I welcome the fact that the political activities of the RSPCA are now subject to close public scrutiny.

The sterile and Utopian precepts of animal rights and animal liberation are not compatible with the healthy survival of the British countryside. There is a task to redefine our relationship with the natural world for the 21st century. Country people, who care for animals rather than pontificate about them, used to belong to the RSPCA in very large numbers. I now urge them to rejoin, so that the debate about animal welfare may properly and openly be conducted within the world's leading animal welfare charity.

In recent times the RSPCA has sought to stifle debate by refusing membership to those who do not support its policies, thus attempting to ensure that those policies cannot be changed. All who share the aims and objectives of the society, ie, animal welfare, are surely entitled to be part of this debate.

Yours faithfully,  
MICHAEL SISSONS,  
c/o The Countryside Movement,  
11 Tufon Street, SW1.  
March 28.

### Referendum on EMU

From Mr Adam Roxborough

Sir, R. D. Bloomfield (letter, March 20) makes the bold assertion that "nine out of ten" of those entitled to vote in a referendum on EMU would be intellectually "unable to grasp the ... arguments", would "vote for the wrong reasons" and "be swayed by TV plausibility, soundbites and one-liners".

It sounds like a general election to me. The fact is, it doesn't matter if my choice or anyone else's choice is ill-informed — what matters is the right to choose.

Yours faithfully,  
ADAM ROXBOROUGH,  
9 Ashwood Avenue,  
West Didsbury, Manchester.  
March 20.

### On the wrong track?

From Mr Benedict Birnberg

Sir, One sympathises with the concern expressed by the Alpine Club at the proposal to build a funicular railway to the summit of Cairn Gorm (letter, March 27). In the circumstances, is it not compounding the felony to call on the Scottish Secretary to "set in train" a strategic analysis of development needs of the area?

Yours faithfully,  
BENEDICT BIRNBERG,  
4 Eliot Place, Blackheath, SE3.  
March 28.

### Ups and downs

From Mr Geoffrey Davies

Sir, Mr Philip Thomas, Chief Executive of Tandridge Council (letter, March 25), apparently believes that "if one council were to rise above the average, another would have to fall below".

This shows a potentially alarming misunderstanding of simple arithmetic: there is not necessarily a constant number of players above and below the average. Perhaps the residents of Tandridge need to re-examine their recent annual statements?

More power to the Audit Commission, if it makes us realise that averages can always be improved, and that success only comes to those who try hardest.

Yours faithfully,  
GEOFFREY DAVIES,  
9 Hurley Close,  
Walton-on-Thames, Surrey.  
March 25.

From Mr John H. Deam

Sir, Mr Thomas need not be surprised at the Controller of the Audit Commission's comment that "it is not enough to be just average. Everyone can and should improve". It has long been known from the results of self-assessment that the standard of driving of more than 90 per cent of motorists in the UK is above average.

Yours sincerely,  
JOHN H. DEAM,  
94 Northover Road,  
Westbury on Trym, Bristol, Avon.  
March 25.

### Question time

From Mr Thomas Hamilton-Jones

Sir, I wonder whether I should prevent my six-year-old son George from watching Prime Minister's Question Time on television. Recently, on being bought a new toy, he asked his mother: "Are the missiles pre-packed; yes or no?"

Yours faithfully,  
THOMAS HAMILTON-JONES,  
25 Lanercost Road, Tulse Hill, SW2.  
March 27.



## Forthcoming marriages

Mr V. Le Boulenger and Miss A. Janssens  
The engagement is announced between Yves, only son of Mr and Mrs Francis Le Boulenger, of Overijse, Belgium, and Alexandra, elder daughter of Mr and Mrs Edouard Janssens, of Overijse, Belgium.

Viscount Samuel and Mrs E. Black  
The engagement is announced between Professor David Herbert, Viscount Samuel, OBE, and Mrs E. Black.

Mr R.W. Tindall and Miss S. Nicholson  
The engagement is announced between Richard, son of Mr and Mrs William Tindall, of Leeds, West Yorkshire, and Sophie, second daughter of Mr and Mrs Michael B. Nicholson, of Long Marston, York, North Yorkshire.

## Marriage

Mr W.J.A. Nash and Miss C.E. Moehle  
The marriage took place quietly in Paris, France, on Thursday, March 28, 1996, between Mr William Nash and Miss Catherine Moehle.

## Legal news

The Honourable Mr Justice Waterhouse and the Honourable Mr Justice Macpherson of Clwyd will retire from their posts as Judges of the High Court (Queen's Bench Division) on April 15.

## Latest wills

Sir Philip Courts Ambrose, 7th St. of West Amesbury, Wiltshire, left estate valued at £3,232,672 net.

Mr Michael John Duffield, of Ealing, London, W5, the television documentary producer, who made films in many of the world's trouble spots, left estate valued at £32,917 net.

Mr William Howard Vincent Levett, of Ryde, East Sussex — "Hopper" Levett, the former Kent wicket-keeper — left estate valued at £90,574 net.

He left £10,000 each to Kent County Cricket Club and the RSCPA.

Kathleen Faith Rayner, of South Ewell, Surrey, left estate valued at £465,114 net.

She left her entire estate to the RSCPA.

Dr Graham Ringer Faber, of Folkestone, Kent, left estate valued at £1,702,669 net.

Other estates include (net, before tax):

Mr Albert Armitstead, of Woodthorpe, Nottinghamshire, £584,825

Mrs Jessie Evelyn Beller, of Clarendon, London, £559,672

Mrs Elizabeth Barker, of Wiltshire, £522,575

Mrs Winifred Grace Chatterton, of Louth, Lincolnshire, £595,072

Mr Olive Mary Crockett, of Slipston, Wychwood, Oxfordshire, £1,095,574

Mrs Isabella Gardner, of Gosforth, Tyne and Wear, £34,155

Mrs June Winifred Maud Russell, of Kingswood, Surrey, £793,499

Mrs Marjorie Downing Hopley, of Darlington, Co. Durham, £1,972,252

Mrs Jean Marguerite Gertrude Hudson, of Warrash, Hampshire, £1,215,680

Florence Ethel Legge, of Kidderminster, Worcestershire, £723,794

Mr John Robert Henry Martin, of Oxford, £650,431

Mr Philip Woodville Martin, of Liverpool, £549,341

Mr Frederick Claude Parsons, of Stourbridge, West Midlands, £525,063.

## The night sky in April

By MICHAEL J. HENDRIE  
ASTRONOMY CORRESPONDENT

MERCURY is an evening star throughout the month, setting in the western sky as much as two hours after the Sun about the 23rd, when it reaches greatest eastern elongation (20 degrees). However, it is brighter at the start of the month at -1 magnitude, fading to 0 magnitude by the 23rd. This will be the most favourable evening apparition of Mercury in 1996.

While Mercury is never seen far from the horizon and in a really dark sky from the British Isles, at favourable apparitions such as this its brightness makes it a fairly easy object, given a clear sky. One can start to look about an hour after sunset, towards and above where the Sun set. The thin crescent Moon will be to the south on the 19th.

Venus reaches greatest eastern elongation (46 degrees) on the 1st when the -4.5 magnitude planet will be a brilliant evening star in the northwestern sky, to the south of the Pleiades. It will move quickly eastwards through Taurus, passing north of Aldebaran in mid-month. The Moon will be to the south on the 20th/21st.

Mars rises only minutes before the Sun and will not be observable until July.

Jupiter is -2.2 magnitude and in Sagittarius rising by 01h late in the month. Moon to the north on the 10th/11th.

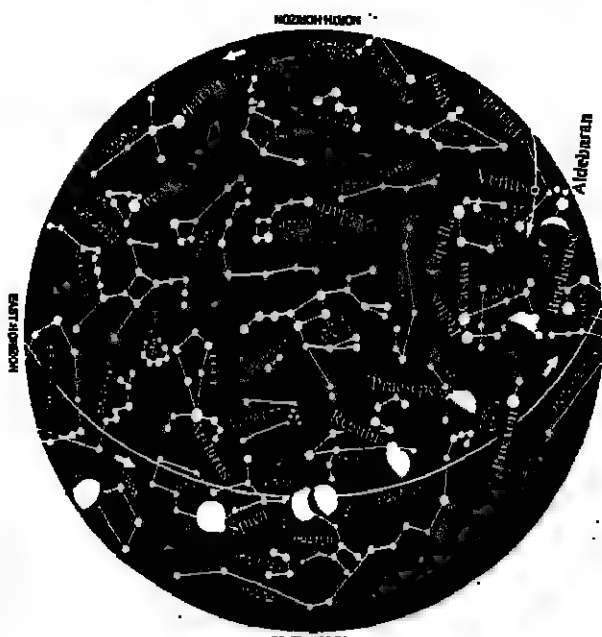
Saturn is in Pisces but remains in bright morning twilight until June.

Uranus is in Capricorn throughout the year, rising by 01h by the 30th. Moon to the north on the 11th and 12th.

Neptune is in Sagittarius throughout the year, rising shortly before Uranus. It reaches a stationary point on the 29th.

The Moon: full Moon, 4d 00h; last quarter, 11d 00h; new Moon, 17d 23h; first quarter, 25d 12h.

Sunset on the 1st is at 18h



The diagram shows the brighter stars that will be above the horizon in the latitude of London at 23h (11 pm) at the beginning, 22h (10 pm) in the middle, and 21h (9 pm) at the end of the month, local mean time. At places away from the Greenwich meridian the Greenwich times at which the diagram applies are later than the above by one hour for each 15 deg west of Greenwich and earlier by the same amount if the place be east. The map should be turned so that the horizon of the observer is facing (shown by the dashed line) the direction in which the Sun is setting. The diagram is drawn for the mean time, known to astronomers as Universal Time and expressed in 24-hour notation. It is used in the accompanying notes unless otherwise stated.

35m and on the 30th at 19h 25m while sunrise is at 05h 35m and 04h 30m on the same dates. Astronomical twilight ends at 20h 30m and 21h 55m early and late in the month and begins again at 03h 40m and 02h 00m.

The Lyrids meteor shower is active from about the 20th-24th with a maximum activity predicted for the night of the 21st/22nd. The radiant, from where the meteors appear to come, is marked on the April chart. Although not normally a very strong shower, with an hourly rate of 10 meteors, stronger displays occur at irregular intervals. With the Moon new on the 17th the conditions are good this year.

The partial solar eclipse on April 17-18 will be visible from New Zealand and parts of the Pacific Ocean and Antarctica. The total eclipse of the Moon on April 3-4 will be visible from the British Isles, weather permitting, as well

as much of the Americas, Europe, western and central Asia, and Africa.

The Moon enters the umbra or inner dark shadow of the Earth at 22h 21m on the evening of the 23rd: the curved shadow of the Earth will be seen encroaching on the Moon's disc. When the Moon is immersed in the Earth's shadow twilight begins, at 23h 26m. Mid-eclipse is at 01h 10m on the 4th and total ends at 01h 53m. The Moon leaves the umbra at 11h 59m.

During a lunar eclipse the Moon may appear orange, copper-coloured, grey or so dark as to be almost invisible during the total phase. Cloudiness in the Earth's atmosphere is known to affect the Moon's brightness.

The weather during much of March has been unhelpful for those hoping to catch sight of comet C/1996 B2 Hyakutake. But reports from the USA and Australia show

the comet is up to predicted brightness and having the characteristic appearance of a bright comet. By the time this appears in print we may be seeing the brightest comet for many years. The comet should continue to be visible with the naked eye and binoculars as it approaches perihelion (its closest to the Sun at 34 million km) on May 2, 1996, when it could be 0 to +1 magnitude.

During April its motion against the sky will slow as it moves away from the Earth. It will remain in Perseus passing near alpha Persei (near the letter 'S' on the chart) to be near Algal on the 8th and moving slowly southwards towards the horizon during the rest of the month.

In April, Hyakutake will best be seen in the northwest as soon as it is dark enough when it will be at its greatest altitude above the horizon. It will remain in view above the northern horizon all night to be in the NNE at dawn. After about the 12th it will be visible only in the evening, though a tail might be seen, given a very dark sky, above the northern horizon after the head of the comet has set.

The Moon is full on the 4th but the sky will be darkened during the total eclipse. The Moon will then be rising later each night, by 22h on the 6th after which it should be little trouble. The comet's brightness as it approaches the Sun will be partly offset by rapidly increasing distance from the Earth and being nearer the horizon. The Moon will greatly interfere in the first three days of the month only.

Nautical twilight ends by 20h (21h BST) by the 4th and 20h 30m by the 20th, but the comet may be visible earlier. Present reports suggest Hyakutake will be a bright naked-eye comet with a well-developed tail. The eclipse and then moonless evenings make it ideal for observation if only the weather is clear.

## The Royal Society of Chemistry

The following were admitted as Fellows of the Royal Society of Chemistry in March 1996. They are entitled to use the designation 'Chartered Chemist' and the letters CChem FRSC.

J A Berry, J Boyle, D A Bryce, A C Cheney, J Cropper, V P Edwards, M R Eury, A Ferry, K G V Garner, P S Gregory, K H Hale, A Harper, N K Howell, M Juntus-Cramer, S M Kelly, A S Khar, I Koppel, K Kurda, A F Marchington, R W Miller, P Myers, P O'Donnell, W H Rowbottom, P J Sarr, K Swaminathan.

## The British Library

The second annual Douglas Bryant Lecture to be held on Tuesday, April 2, 1996, has had to be cancelled due to the withdrawal of the speaker, Dr James Billington. The British Library apologises for the short notice of this change, and regrets any inconvenience caused. Further information 0171-412 7760.

## Brigadier D.H. Nott

A Service of Thanksgiving for the life of Brigadier Donald Nott will be held at Worcester Cathedral on Saturday, April 27, at noon.

## Birthdays today



Lord Tebbit, CH, who is 65 today

Jennifer Capriati, the tennis player: 20 today

planner, 65; Mr John Major, Prime Minister, 53; Mr Hugh Neill, Lord-Lieutenant of South Yorkshire, 75; Sir John Paul, former Governor-General of The Bahamas, 80; Sir John Reed, former chairman, TSB Group, 78; Miss Fiona Reynolds, director, Council for the Protection of Rural England, 38; Lord Ross, 69; Miss Anne Stoddart, diplomat, 59; Sir John Vane, pharmacologist, 69; the Very Rev James Weatherhead, former Moderator of the Church of Scotland General Assembly, 65.

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## Anniversaries

BIRTHS: John Tyler, 10th American President 1841-45, Charles City, Virginia, 1790; Edward George Stanley, 14th Earl of Derby, Prime Minister 1852, 1858-59 and 1860-68, Knowley Park, Lancashire, 1799; Sir Edwin Lutyens, architect, London, 1869; Sir William Walton, composer, Oldham, 1902; Edward Burns, painter, London, 1905.

DEATHS: Thomas Coram, philanthropist, London, 1751; Emanuel Swedenborg, philosopher, London, 1772; Charles Wesley, hymn writer, London, 1788; Maria Fitzherbert, morganatic wife of King George IV, Brighton, 1837; John Jacob Astor, fur trader and financier, New York, 1848; John Kettle, theologian, Bournemouth, 1895; Georges Seurat, painter, Paris, 1891; Sir Charles Stanford, composer, London, 1924; Margaret McMillan, educationist, Harrow, 1931; J. Arthur Rank, 1st Baron Rank, industrialist and film magnate, 1972; Carl Orff, composer, Munich, 1982.

Henry VI's Lancastrian forces defeated by Yorkists at Battle of Tewkesbury, securing the Crown of England for Edward IV, 1461.

The Albert Hall was opened by Queen Victoria, 1871.

Captain Robert Scott, storm-bound in a tent near the South Pole, made the last entry in his diary "... the end cannot be far ..." 1912.

The last American troops left Vietnam, 1973.

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## COURT CIRCULAR

LIECHTENSTEIN PALACE  
MAGNATE

March 28: The Queen received Mr Vaclav Klaus (Prime Minister) this morning.

Her Majesty received Mr Milan Uhde (Speaker of the Parliament). The Queen subsequently flew to Brno and was received at the Airport by The President of the Czech Republic.

Her Majesty drove to Brno Town Hall and was received by Dr Dagmar Lastovicka (Lady Mayor).

The Queen met members of the Council and afterwards attended a Reception for the judiciary and members of the University, after which Her Majesty returned to Prague.

The Queen and The Duke of Edinburgh this evening attended a Gala Concert, after which Her Majesty and His Royal Highness, accompanied by The President of the Czech Republic, gave a Reception at the Rudolfinum, Prague.

His Royal Highness, Patron and Trustee, The Duke of Edinburgh's Award, this morning presented International Youth Awards at Liechtenstein Palace.

The Duke of Edinburgh afterwards opened a Design and Technology Exhibition at Prague 2 Town Hall.

His Royal Highness later visited Kuma Hora Town Hall, followed by a visit to St Barbara's Church.

The Duke of Edinburgh afterwards viewed an exhibition and attended a Luncheon at the Castle. His Royal Highness later visited

Kladruhy Stud, watched a demonstration of Carriage Driving and attended a Reception.

BUCKINGHAM PALACE  
March 28: The Duke of York, this morning left Heathrow Airport, London, for Washington DC, United States of America, to carry out a series of engagements in connection with the American Air Museum in Great Britain.

Captain Neil Blair RN and Mr Geoffrey Crawford are in attendance.

ST JAMES'S PALACE  
March 28: The Prince of Wales, Patron, the Wildfowl Trusts, this morning visited the Norfolk Wildlife Trust's Reserve at Clay on the North Norfolk Coast.

KENSINGTON PALACE  
March 28: The Princess Margaret, Countess of Snowdon was present this evening at a Gala Performance by the English National Ballet at the London Coliseum, London, WC2.

The Queen has been graciously pleased to appoint the Reverend Richard Bolton to be a Priest in Ordinary to Her Majesty.

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The Princess Royal, as Colonel-in-Chief, will visit the Royal Logistic Corps Training Centre, The Prince of Wales Barracks, Blackdown, Camberley, at 10.30.

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## Luncheons

HM Government  
Mr Jeremy Hanley, Minister of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, was the host at a luncheon given by Her Majesty's Government yesterday at Lancaster House in honour of ASEAN Heads of Mission.

Royal Albert Hall  
The President and The Council of the Royal Albert Hall were the hosts at a luncheon yesterday in the Hall to mark the 125th Anniversary of its opening by Queen Victoria.

## Receptions

HM Government  
The Chancellor of the Exchequer was the host at a reception given by Her Majesty's Government last night at Lancaster House to mark the creation of the Office for National Statistics and the appointment of Dr Tim Holt as Chief Executive of the Office for National Statistics and Registrar General for England and Wales.

British Safety Council  
Mr Matthew Carrington, MP, was the host at a reception held yesterday at the House of Commons for the British Safety Council Five Star safety awards.

Wigmore Hall International Song Competition  
Mr William Lyne, Dr Ralph Kohn and Mr Graham Johnson were the hosts at a reception held at the Wigmore Hall yesterday to mark the opening of the Wigmore Hall International Song Competition which will take place in September 1997. It was also announced that the first Wigmore Hall Medal would be presented to Herr Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau, Patron of the Wigmore Hall International Song Competition, at the Finals of the first competition in recognition of his unique achievement in the world of music.

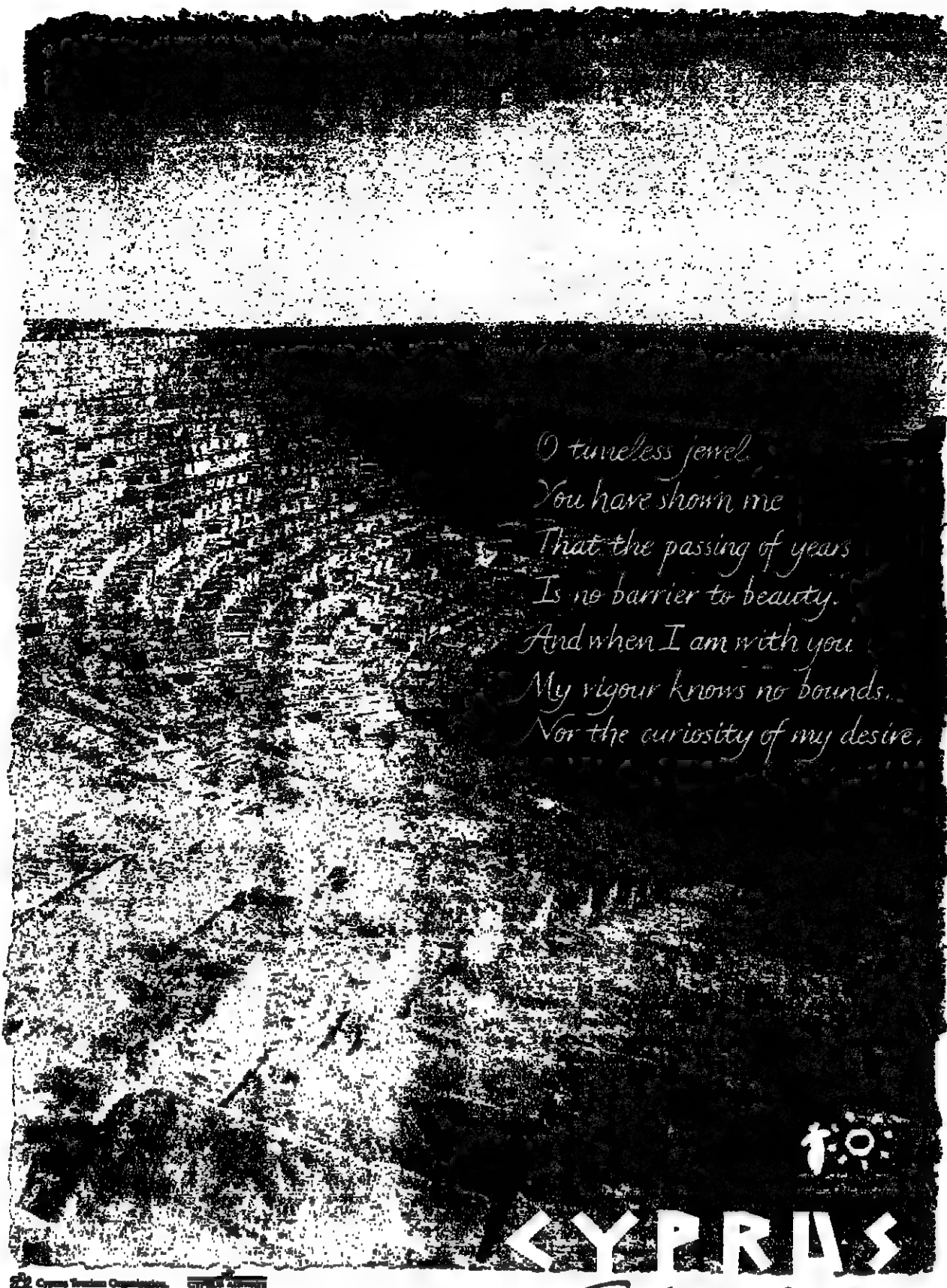
## Requiem Mass

Professor Alistair Crombie  
Requiem Mass for Professor Alistair Crombie, a lecturer in History of Science, Oxford University, 1953-83, was celebrated by Father Peter Codd assisted by Canon Richard Ingledown and the Rev Professor Armogathe, of the Sorbonne, in the Chapel of Trinity College,









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There is new hope for a Cyprus settlement. In a two-page report

# Peace talks to untie

A flood of foreign envoys is expected in Nicosia, the world's last divided capital, as the international community attempts once more this summer to untie the Gordian knot that is the Cyprus problem. New elements have emerged that have convinced many there may be an opportunity to end the island's cold war that has bogged down the United Nations peacekeepers for more than three decades.

The most important is Cyprus's looming accession to the European Union, which could take place as early as 2000. It has focused minds in Brussels, which dreads the possibility of admitting a divided country. A European Union diplomat in Nicosia says: "By 2000 we must at least have progress towards a settlement."

Relations between Europe and Turkey, which has 32,000 troops occupying northern Cyprus, were clarified by last December's customs union agreement, and the Turkish Cypriots need a solution.

The economy of their tiny twilight state, recognised by no government except the one in Ankara, is in dire straits. And, after months of being rudderless, both Greece and Turkey have new Governments. The United States has also declared 1996 the year of the "big push on Cyprus".

The island's division is one of the main bones of contention between Greece and Turkey, whose feuding undermines Nato's important south-eastern flank. Both countries have troops in Cyprus. As well as Turkey's 32,000 mainland troops, there is a 3,500-strong Turkish Cypriot force, and in the south there is the 10,000-strong Greek Cypriot National Guard, reinforced by about 1,800 mainland Greek officers and NCOs.

The American push was due to start in February with high-profile shuttle diplomacy between Athens, Ankara and Nicosia by Richard Holbrooke, the Assistant Secretary of State who brokered the Bosnian peace accords. He was diverted, however, by a



**Military checkpoint in Nicosia, flashpoint of the right-wing coup of summer 1974**

near Greco-Turkish war in the Aegean in January over the tiny uninhabited island known as Imia to the Greeks and Kardak to the Turks. Last month, Mr Holbrooke left the State Department to return to Wall Street. This caused little concern in Cyprus. After decades of failed initiatives, few Cypriots any longer believe in miracle men.

President Clinton, the cynics argue, is going through the motions to placate the noisy Greek lobby in a US election year and will do nothing to upset Turkey. America's regional watchdog, But Washington's renewed interest seems to have galvanised European resolve. A senior UN official in Nicosia says: "After the Dayton conference [where the Bosnian deal was finalised], the Europeans were concerned that another opportunity to solve an essentially European problem was slipping away."

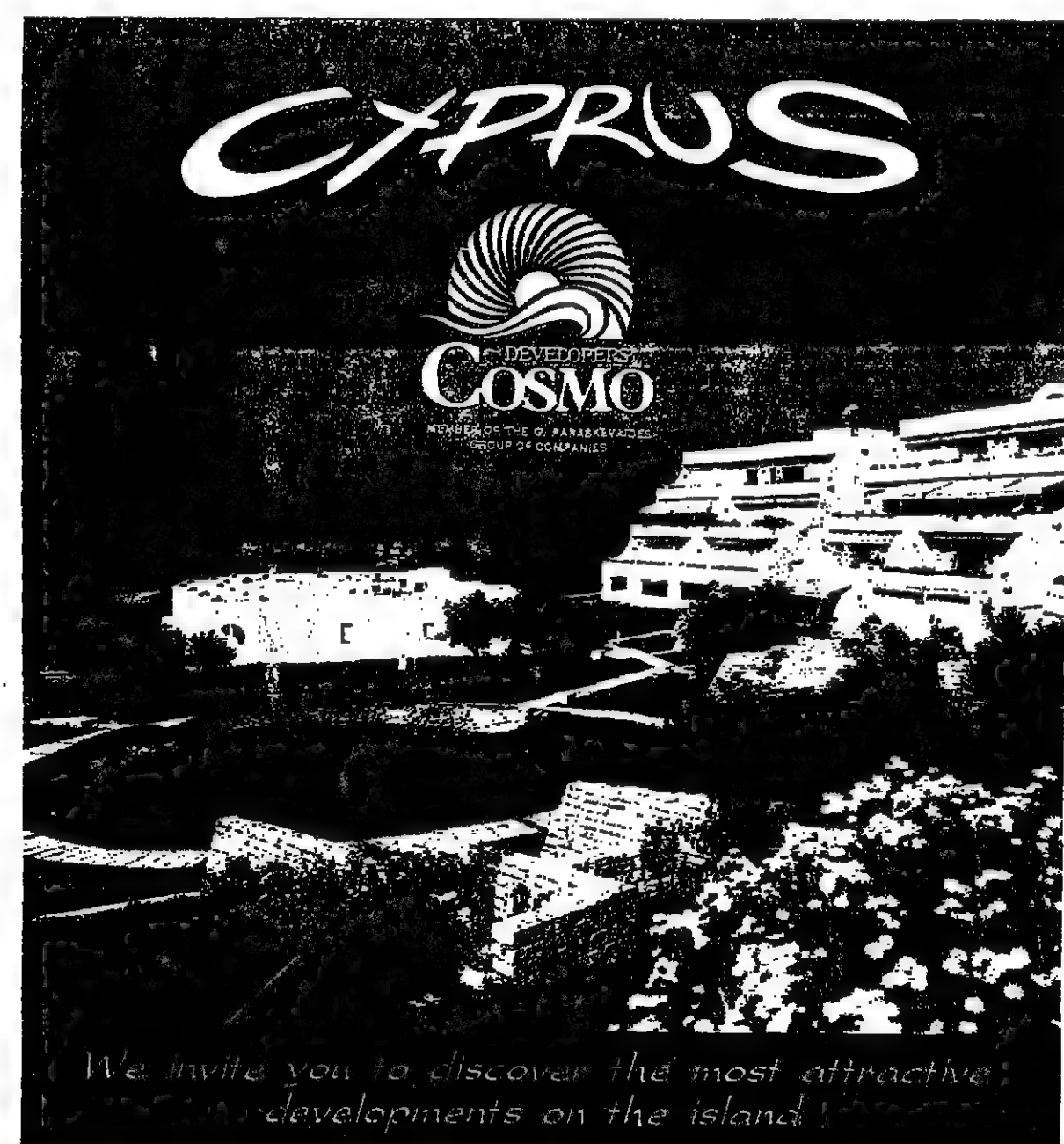
In January, EU foreign ministers chose their own Cyprus troubleshooter, Federico Di Roberto, Italy's former Ambassador to Moscow. A lull is likely while Greek Cypriots prepare for May parliamentary elections. Rauf Denktas, the Turkish Cypriot leader, will not receive visitors for two months while he recovers from a heart attack.

American and European officials emphasise that they will not come bearing separate peace plans but will give extra muscle to well-known United Nations initiatives. Cyprus has been effectively divided on Orthodox Greek Cypriot and Muslim Turkish Cypriot lines since the summer of 1974. The colonels then ruling Athens backed a right-wing coup in Nicosia staged against President Makarios on July 15.

Among its leaders were men known to be fanatically anti-

Turkish. Turkey, as one of the guarantors of the island's independence, cited treaty rights and intervened five days later by landing paratroopers and insisting that its action was to protect the Turkish Cypriot minority, which had often suffered from the violent excesses of right-wing Greek nationalists.

**W**ithin days the coup collapsed, as did the Athens military junta. But the Turkish troops stayed, turning their supposed intervention into an invasion that was condemned internationally. Eventually they controlled 37 per cent of the island. Fearing for their safety, 180,000 Greek Cypriots fled from northern Cyprus and 45,000 Turkish Cypriots abandoned their homes in the south. It left the Turkish Cypriots, about one in five of



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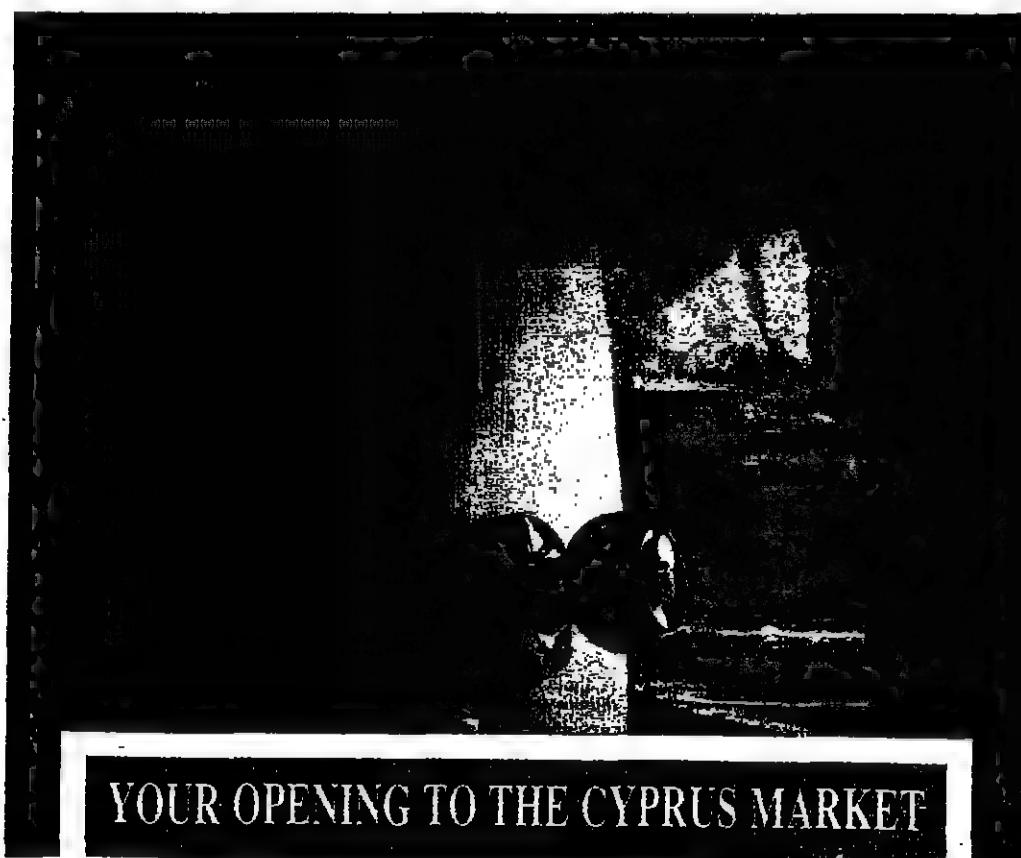
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THE TIMES OF  
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Bournemouth airport goes international



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Cheryl Studer turns Strauss to silver at Covent Garden



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Education 39

# THE TIMES

BUSINESS EDITOR Lindsay Cook

FRIDAY MARCH 29 1996

## Anger over 'savage' job cuts

# Merged utility to cut an extra 1,700 workers

By CHRISTINE BUCKLEY

UNITED UTILITIES, the group formed from North West Water and Norweb electricity, is to cut 1,700 more jobs by integrating the two operations.

The company also announced that water charges will rise 5.8 per cent this year, while electricity charges will go up 4.9 per cent. While other water bills have risen this year, the electricity price hike flies in the face of other price announcements.

The job cuts are planned to be voluntary, with workers offered packages of between £20,000 and £50,000. They will be staged over the next three years and will cost the company £104 million. The cuts come on top of 800 losses announced after the merger. The future is also uncertain for a further 4,500 staff in operations that United said yesterday it planned to sell.

Labour and Unison, the broad-based union representing a large percentage of workers at the merged utility condemned the move. Michael Meacher, Shadow Employment Secretary, said: "When the utilities were privatised, the Tories promised the public that putting together gas, water and electricity companies would make for efficiency and a better service to the consumer. In fact it has led to rising water charges, wholesale job losses for front-line staff and huge fat-cat salary rises for senior managers."

Mike Jeram, Unison's head of energy, said: "Our worst fears have come true today. This level of cuts is a savage blow to our members." He added: "This is a highly profitable company and the real

reason for these cuts is bigger profits and dividends." The company said that it regretted the losses but that there were substantial cost savings to be made on the merger which, said Brian Staples, chief executive, exceeded initial hopes.

United expects to make savings of £140 million a year once the integration of the two operations is complete. That estimate is 40 per cent ahead of the expectations when North West Water took over its electricity neighbour. The

company said that it regretted the losses but that there were substantial cost savings to be made on the merger which, said Brian Staples, chief executive, exceeded initial hopes.

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## The heavy price of privatisation

MORE than 42,000 jobs have been lost in the electricity industry since it was privatised. The water industry has seen the loss of nearly 11,000 workers since the 10 main companies were sold. British Gas has shed 25,000 workers and recently announced plans for further cuts. British Telecommunications has cut more than 100,000 since it went into private hands.

company will also sell some businesses including its retail operation and investment in generating plant in disposals that it expects to deliver £350 million.

The benefits of cost savings will go entirely to shareholders until the year 2000 when the next regulatory review on pricing will set tougher standards that should bring price cuts. In the meantime United has told the water and electricity regulators that it will offer spontaneous paybacks to cus-

tomers if the merger of the two companies delivers greater than expected savings - as it is proving to do. However, it will be a gentleman's agreement and effectively in the hands of the company. Even after 2000, benefits will be delivered to customers only on a transitional basis with half the gains from acquisition still liable to be returned to shareholders.

Mr Staples said that one-off returns to customers were likely but would not elaborate. United's sale programme for its businesses includes Norweb Retail and follows a trend by electricity companies to bail out of retail operations. It is also selling the water division's process equipment and the company's interest in generation. Mr Staples said he was not convinced of the benefits of vertical integration to electricity companies despite the movement by the generators to acquire regional companies.

The shake-up comes as the company has finalised its programme for the merger of the electricity and water operations and is ahead of its results for 1995-96. Those results will show a provision of £173 million made against long-term power purchase contracts made by Norweb at the two power stations which United is its selling interests in.

The results will also show a dry weather provision of £25 million for extra costs in the water business after last year's drought. The company is putting £75 million into its water division which has a leakage rate of about 26 per cent.

Pennington, page 27



The eyes have it: accompanied by two models, André Cohen, chief executive of Eyecare Products, the maker of sunglasses and spectacle frames, yesterday reported 1995 profits of £3.2 million before tax after losses of £3 million 1994

## BT merger talks with C&W reopen

By ERIC REGULY

CABLE AND WIRELESS said last night that it had reopened merger talks with BT to create one of the world's largest telecom groups. The statement came after C&W shares rose 34p to 511½p, setting a high for the year.

C&W said that "some exploratory discussions are being held with British Telecommunications which may or may not lead to the merger of the two companies." Neither company would give details. It is thought that C&W has also held informal talks with AT&T, America's largest long-distance phone company. AT&T, like BT, is attracted to C&W because of its strong presence in Asia, where it owns 57.5 per cent of Hong Kong Telecom.

The merger talks began in secret late last year. C&W was forced to announce two weeks ago that the talks had collapsed. It gave no reason, but sources close to the negotiations said C&W balked at the merger proposal when BT refused to consider a deal that valued C&W shares at more than about 550p. When the talks began, C&W shares were trading at about 420p.

It is now understood that informal contacts between the companies continued, despite the statements put out by C&W and BT earlier this month. Their financial advisers are said to have continued working on the project. C&W's adviser is Goldman Sachs, the US investment bank. The man heading the team is Richard Sharp, the Goldman Sachs managing director who is son of Lord Sharp, the former chairman of C&W. BT's adviser is NM Rothschild.

The two companies are now discussing various issues, including the value and the structure of the deal. During the last round of meetings at board level, BT was said to be willing to value C&W at some premium, but was not prepared to add a significant amount.

The companies, however, had reached an agreement in principle on the structure of the merger. It was to be done through a reverse takeover, in which C&W would have issued new shares to acquire the much larger BT. BT proposed this because it wanted to avoid the £6 billion expense of having to buy out the minority shareholders of Hong Kong Telecom. Under Hong Kong stock exchange rules, a takeover of C&W would force the new owner to buy out the minority shareholders.

Pennington, page 27

## BUSINESS TODAY

STOCK MARKET INDICES		
FT-SE 100	3672.6	(+0.2)
Yield	4.04%	
FT-SE All share	1831.38	(+0.45)
Nikkei	21255.82	(-34.16)
New York		
Dow Jones	8862.58	(-24.23)*
S&P Composite	847.78	(-1.19)*
US RATE		
Federal Funds	5 1/4%	(5 1/4%)
Long Bond	9 3/4%	(9 1/4%)
Yield	6.71%	(6.68%)
LOANED MONEY		
3-month interbank	6 1/4%	(6 1/4%)
18m long bill	10 1/4%	(10 1/4%)
FX RATE		
New York	1.5240*	(1.5185)
London	1.5241	(1.5185)
DM	2.2500	(2.2578)
FF	7.8320	(7.8385)
SFr	1.8108	(1.8203)
Yen	162.08	(161.84)
\$ Index	93.3	(93.4)
COMMODITIES		
Oil	1.4767*	(1.4880)
Gold	353.85*	(353.85)
Silver	1.1508*	(1.1505)
Yen	162.08	(161.84)
\$ Index	93.3	(93.4)
Tokyo close Yen	108.71	
BOND YIELD		
10-year	6.71%	(6.68%)
30-year	7.83%	(7.83%)
15-day (Jun)	91.80	(91.48)
10-year (Jul)	91.80	(91.48)
30-year (Jul)	91.80	(91.48)
London close	8397.85	(8400.25)
* denotes midday trading price		

## In fighting

Britain's business prospects are being damaged by continuing Conservative Party in-fighting over Europe, as the inter-governmental conference on the future of Europe opens in Turin. The Institute of Management has found that 63 per cent of managers believe that the continuing disagreements within the Conservative Party over Europe are adversely affecting business. Page 26

## Solid figures

Blue Circle, the building group that last month said it would cut up to 1,300 jobs, yesterday reported a pre-tax profit of £263.8 million for last year, compared with £184.4 million in 1994. Page 27

## Eidos buys games company

EIDOS, the computer technology and games company, has agreed to buy CentreGold, the games software publisher, in a £17.2 million all-share deal (Eric Reguly writes). It will be funded by a £23.8 million rights issue.

The announcement came shortly after CentreGold's shares started trading after their suspension at 37p in early February for failure to publish full-year financial results.

The deal values CentreGold shares at 40p, well below their issue price of 123p in 1993. The shares peaked at 165p, then began to slump when demand switched to more advanced games based on CD-Roms.

Charles Cornwall, chief executive of Eidos, said CentreGold has made the conversion and now has a strong list of software releases on CD-Rom format. Eidos had an operating loss of £695,000 in the half year to the end of January, compared with an £11.4 million loss in the 12 months to August.

## RJB announces buy-back as profits exceed forecasts

By CHRISTINE BUCKLEY

THE first annual figures from Britain's privatised coal industry raced ahead of forecasts when RJB, the company which bought the bulk of British Coal's English collieries, produced pre-tax profits of £173.1 million.

Increased electricity demand and greater cost savings than expected meant that sales and pre-tax profits to December 31 were sharply up on projections made in RJB's prospectus when it was about to buy the pits.

Britain's biggest coal producer also announced plans for a £100 million share buy-back. Richard Budge, chief executive, said: "We are in a position to give something back to the people who invested in us and took the risks so that is what we intend to do."

It has £55 million of acquisition debt left after paying back £313 million last year and is 49 per cent geared. The company plans to repay the remainder of the debt by April next year. RJB cut production costs 5 per cent further than it had forecast, taking its cost of producing coal to 121p a

gigajoule, which is about 4p below some estimates. RJB is under pressure to bring down coal costs ahead of renegotiating contracts with electricity generators. Its contracts with National Power and PowerGen expire in 1998.

Electricity demand increased 2.6 per cent last year, against a forecast rise of 1.5 per cent.

Increased use spread



Richard Budge is to buy back shares to reward investors

throughout the year, boosted by more use of air conditioning and refrigeration in the summer. There was also an unexpected demand from generators. Last year, before the British Coal purchase, RJB produced pre-tax profits of £16.09 million.

The final dividend, payable on May 24, is 10.5p, making a total of 16p and a rise of 28 per cent.

Telecom, page 28

## Loans hint at revival in housing

By JANET BUSH  
ECONOMICS CORRESPONDENT

FURTHER tentative signs of recovery in the housing market emerged yesterday with figures showing higher bank mortgage lending and an encouraging rise in new mortgage approvals.

The British Bankers' Association said major banks made gross loans of £15.4 billion in February, 3 per cent up on January. Net lending, which has the advantage of being seasonally adjusted, rose by £631 million, compared with a rise of £578 million in January.

New approvals were well up on January, rising by 32 per cent. This jump mostly reflected seasonal factors, but was still a much better performance than last year, suggesting an underlying improvement. Between January and February last year, approvals were up only 14 per cent.

Tim Sweeney, the Director-General of the BBA, said that banks appeared to have gained market share from building societies, but he also said that there appeared to have been a modest firming in the housing market.

## CableTel to buy NTL in £235m deal

By ERIC REGULY

US-OWNED International CableTel agreed yesterday to buy NTL, the broadcast and communications services provider, in a deal marking the cable industry's first significant diversification.

CableTel, the third-largest cable company, is to acquire NTL debt-free for £200 million cash plus a payment of up to £35 million in a year's time. The price represents a hefty return for Mercury

Development Capital, which owns 78 per cent. It paid about £70 million for its stake in 1991, when NTL, then owned by the Independent Broadcasting Authority, was privatised.

NTL is best known for having built the broadcasting network for ITV and Channel 4 and most of the commercial radio stations, and is constructing the broadcasting system for Channel 5. It also set up a national telecommunications network by installing microwave

radio links between its transmission mast sites.

CableTel, whose shares are listed on America's Nasdaq market, has 58,000 cable TV and telephony customers in franchises ranging from Northern Ireland to West Surrey. Those franchises contain 2.3 million homes and it expects to complete its network by the turn of the century at a cost of £1.2 billion.

CableTel and NTL said their merger, in effect, would create a mini-BT.

Barclay Knapp, CableTel's chief executive, said: "We're putting together a local and national network, like BT, except ours will have high-capacity broadband capability."

They said they plan to offer a full range of voice, video and data transmission services to business and residential customers and may eventually offer high-speed Internet access links.

Pennington, page 27

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Pennington, page 27



# Managers hit at Tory fighting on Europe

By Philip Bassett, Industrial Editor

BRITAIN'S business prospects are being damaged by continuing Conservative Party in-fighting over Europe, UK managers say today as the inter-governmental conference on the future of Europe opens in Turin.

Sixty-three per cent of managers believe that the continuing disagreements within the Conservative Party over Europe are adversely affecting the UK's business relationships in Europe, according to a survey carried out by the Institute of Management.

Furthermore, 64 per cent of managers, surveyed by the institute in conjunction with BBC TV's *Business Breakfast*, say that the adoption by the Government of a clearly Euro-sceptical agenda would damage British business. The survey, of a representative

sample of almost 400 senior managers, shows that Britain's business leaders are strongly pro-Europe, with as many as 79 per cent supporting closer economic union with the EU.

However, they are sceptical about political union, with 52 per cent against it.

The study shows majority support for a referendum on the UK's participation in a single currency, with 51 per cent in favour.

However, support for a single currency itself is more finely balanced.

The findings are awkward for the Government, but support business organisations such as the Confederation of British Industry that insist that the inter-governmental conference must place competitiveness at the top of its agenda for Europe.

Managers remain divided on the issue of a single currency. Some business organisations, such as the Institute of Directors, claim strong opposition among company leaders to a single currency, but the institute's survey is in line with others in suggesting that business opinion is divided, with 43 per cent in favour and 44 per cent against.

However, institute officials point out that this may represent a "warming" of opinion towards a single currency, since in a similar survey six months ago, only 39 per cent were in favour, with 46 per cent against.

Managers remain concerned about the cost of some European proposals, in particular the EU's social agenda. However, there is support for one issue ministers that insist is contentious — the introduction of European-style works councils.

The idea that they should be adopted in the UK is supported by 47 per cent of managers, with only 30 per cent against.

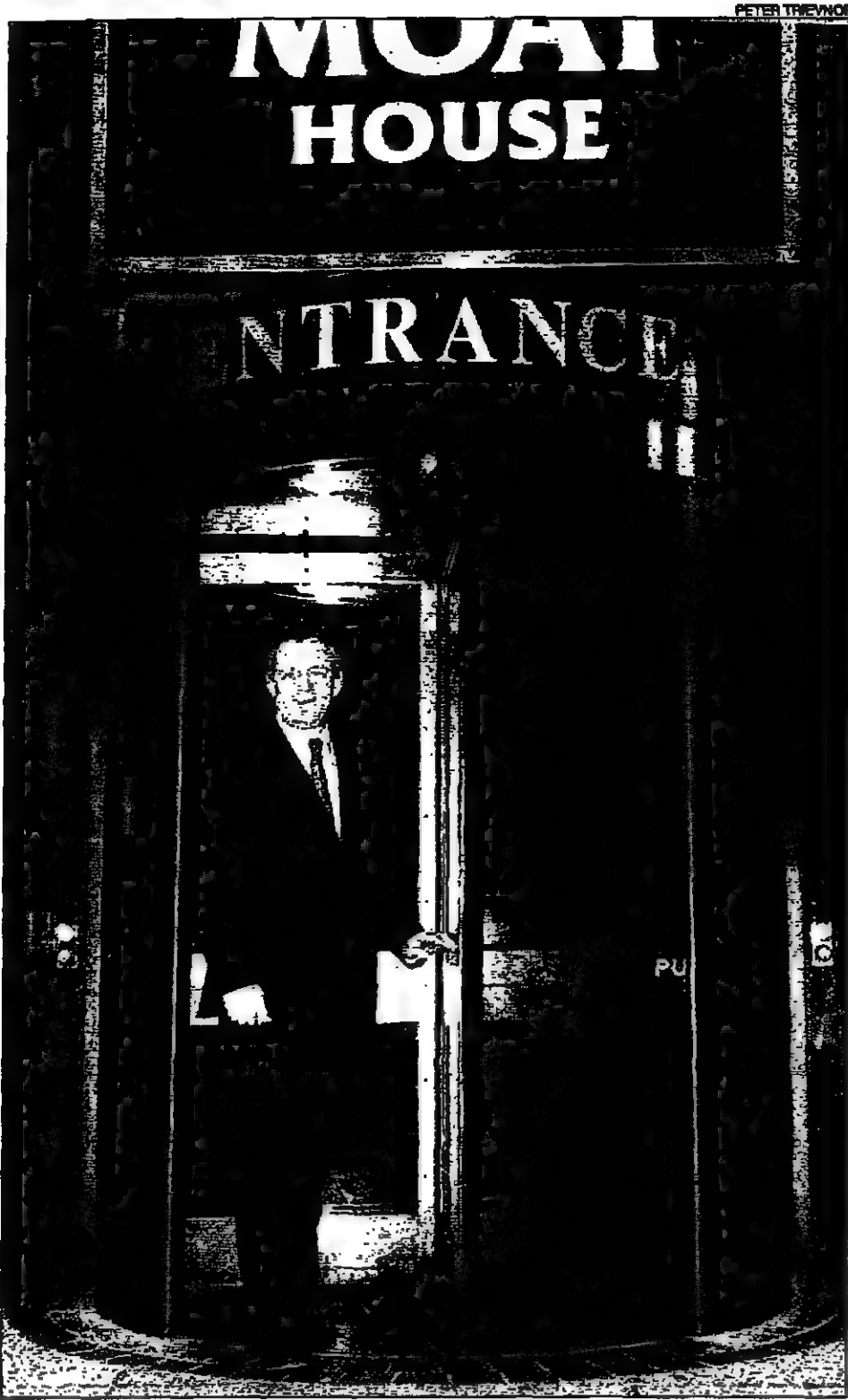
## Coventry rewards customers

THE Coventry Building Society is to return half its annual profits to customers in a £20 million package of mortgage cuts and improved savers' rates (Anne Ashworth writes).

The move is designed to affirm the thirteen largest society's commitment to mutualism. Another aim is to retain borrowers in the mortgage war between lenders by giving loyal customers better deals.

About 40,000 borrowers who have been with the society for five years or more will see their mortgage rate reduced by 0.76 per cent to 6.49 per cent.

The rates on 575,000 Coventry variable rate savings accounts will be raised by up to 0.5 per cent.



Andrew Coppel says that Queens Moat Houses will be making more disposals

## Queens Moat cuts £56m from its losses

By Alastair Murray

QUEENS MOAT HOUSES, the hotel group, yesterday unveiled a cut in full-year losses excluding exceptional items to £25 million, from £81 million in 1994, helped by an improved operating performance.

However, the company remains heavily in debt, in spite of last year's £13 billion refinancing package, with net liabilities of £196 million and net debt only slightly reduced at £1 billion.

However, Andrew Coppel, chief executive, insisted that the company was meeting the terms of its financing package and would continue to do so through increased operating profits and further disposals. It would also "explore one or two avenues towards repackaging the balance sheet". He was cautiously optimistic about this year's prospects, with further growth expected in the UK.

The group has been the subject of bid rumours in recent weeks, with the Barclay brothers and Stakis, the leisure group, mentioned. Earlier this week, it emerged that a Swiss investment firm, Incoactive Investment, had taken a 11.2 per cent stake. However, Mr Coppel said that Queens Moat had not received an approach from any potential buyer.

Full-year operating profits rose by 27 per cent, to £44.7 million, aided by higher room yields in the UK and The Netherlands. Overall turnover rose by 6 per cent, to £454 million. There is no dividend. Revaluation resulted in a 6.4 per cent like-for-like rise in the value of the group's hotels, to £291.3 million.

Pennington, page 21

## Central Statistical Office bows out

By Janet Bush, Economics Correspondent

FAREWELL to the Central Statistical Office. Hello to the grandly titled Office for National Statistics.

Today is the last day of independence for the CSO, set up by Winston Churchill in 1941 in the same building as the War Cabinet in Horseguards Road. He wanted reliable statistics to that he could

properly harness the economy to the war effort.

From Monday, the CSO merges with the Office of Population Censuses & Surveys as the new ONS.

The national importance of good statistics is still being emphasised, more than 50 years on. Dr Tim Holt, the dynamic head of the CSO who now becomes chief executive of the ONS, said: "Statistics are a cornerstone of democra-

cy." He said he wanted to overcome the average Briton's fears of figures by making them easier to use, more relevant and more easily understood.

The new office will, for the first time, create a single institution which will give a complete statistical picture of social and economic life in Britain. The array of publications on offer is extraordinary, from a definitive guide to the

popularity of first names to *Housing Deprivation and Social Change* and the *National Diet and Nutrition Survey*, as well as all the key economic statistics.

There is one unfortunate statistic which greets the new merger. Like most other sections of Whitehall, there will be job losses. The ONS expects to lose about 200 posts. But the new statistics powerhouse will still employ 3,400.

## Profits at Booker rise to £82m

A strong performance by its cash & carry and salmon farming businesses helped to lift 1995 pre-tax profits at Booker, the food group, to £82.8 million (£69.8 million). The company said that it has a low exposure to the beef business, so the BSE scare should have little impact on its profitability. Its much larger fish business may benefit if the public alters its diet.

Booker is recommending a full-year dividend of 23.1p per share, up from 22.4p. Its shares rose 13p to 395p yesterday.

### China venture

Grand Metropolitan, the drinks company, has formed a joint venture with Qifu, the state-owned Chinese distillery, to produce and market its spirits in China. It will invest about £18 million in a new joint company which will be 67 per cent owned by International Distillers and Vintners, its spirit subsidiary. Production is expected by November.

### Roskel ahead

Roskel, the specialist building products group, lifted pre-tax profits to £2.7 million (£1.7 million) in 1995. Earnings were 10.69p (6.49p) a share. The total dividend rises to 4.6p (4.3p), with a final 3.3p due on July 1. Shares rose 10p to 112p.

### Buyer sought

Vaux Group, the brewing, public houses and hotels group, is seeking a buyer for St Andrews, its care home business which comprises 35 homes. Last year the business made pre-tax profits of £4.6 million on turnover of £20.2 million. Vaux said options include a management buyout.

### Water price rise

Water and sewerage bills in England and Wales will rise 2.3 per cent on average this year, Ian Byatt, the regulator, said the figure — which included rebates paid by companies — showed an encouraging deceleration in the increases in bills. The rise takes the average household bill to £218.

## Deutsche Bank plans to expand

By Patricia Teran, Banking Correspondent

DEUTSCHE BANK plans to spend DM700 million expanding its investment banking business this year, up from DM400 million in 1995.

Deutsche merged its international investment banking operations with those of Morgan Grenfell in October 1994 and put them under the new Deutsche Morgan Grenfell name in June last year. Since the start of last year, the company has hired 200 staff.

Hilmar Kopper, chief executive of Deutsche Bank, said: "In investment banking, we plan special expenditure of around DM700 million in 1996, particularly for staff."

The bank does not produce separate figures for DMG. However, it said securities, foreign exchange and derivatives trading profits doubled to DM2 billion.

DMG worked on Seeboard's £1.6 billion offer for Central & South West Corporation and SouthPower's £1.1 billion bid for Manweb last year. Deutsche Bank's net profits were 23.5 per cent higher at DM2.1 billion. Last year's acquisition of Barings held back banking profits for ING, the Dutch financial services group. They were 15 per cent higher at 2.65 billion guilders (£1.05 billion).

### TOURIST RATES

	Swiss	Swiss
	Days	Sales
Australia \$	2.04	1.88
Austria Sfr	13.20	15.40
Belgium Fr	49.42	46.12
Canada \$	2.182	2.022
Cyprus Cyp	0.750	0.695
Denmark Kr	13.54	12.54
Finland Mk	7.62	6.98
France Fr	8.12	7.47
Germany Dm	2.41	2.20
Greece Dr	380.00	364.00
Hong Kong \$	13.20	11.30
Ireland Ir	1.22	0.94
Israel Shk	5,140.00	4,480.00
Italy Lit	2,500.00	2,293.00
Japan Yen	170.20	160.20
Malta	0.586	0.533
Netherlands Gld	2.981	2.451
New Zealand \$	2.29	2.17
Norway Kr	10.41	9.51
Portugal Esc	244.50	228.00
S Africa Rd	6.00	5.80
Spain Ptas	167.00	164.00
Sweden Kr	10.75	9.95
Switzerland Fr	1.98	1.78
Turkey Lira	112.00	104.00
USA \$	1.977	1.847

Rates for small denomination bank notes only as supplied by Barclays Bank PLC. Different rates apply to travellers' cheques. Rates as of close of trading yesterday.

## BUSINESS ROUNDUP

### British Energy float cheaper for public

THIRTY per cent of the shares of British Energy, the company formed from the more modern parts of the nuclear industry, will be offered to the public at a discount when the business floats in July. The discount to the price professional investors will have to pay will be determined later but is likely to be about 2-3 per cent. A package of incentives, yet to be decided, is also to be tacked on to the offer for private investors who buy through share shops.

The flotation, which is thought unlikely to command a high price in the market, begins in earnest in late May when the Government will start marketing British Energy. Some of the more pessimistic forecasts put the value of the company, which is locked in discussions with the Department of Trade and Industry over the debt it will take into the private sector, at £2.1 billion. This falls substantially short of the £2.9 billion to build the Sizewell B generating plant, which has recently been commissioned.

### Bank to cut 150 jobs

THE Bank of England is to cut 150 jobs and close four of its five regional branches after deciding to concentrate its banknote activity in a single cash centre in Leeds. The Bank will end its cash-handling in Birmingham, Bristol, Manchester and Newcastle, opting for the one northern site and one southern operation, split between London and Debden, Essex. The Bank plans to maintain agencies in each of the cities to monitor economic trends, and to open agencies in Cardiff, Nottingham and Greater London, making 12 in all.

### Graseby falls back

GRASEBY, the electronic instrumentation company, has promised to return to profit growth this year after a 40 per cent fall in full-year profits for 1995 to £6 million. The company was hit by teething problems with its new product-monitoring equipment and by a £2.1 million charge for the termination of contracts in its environmental division. Overall turnover was flat at £94 million. The total dividend is unchanged, at 6.6p, with a final dividend of 3.9p payable on May 28. The company's shares rose by 1.5p, to 120p.

### Senior moves ahead

SENIOR ENGINEERING, the specialist international engineering group, achieved a 40 per cent rise in profits from continuing operations in 1995 and said it entered 1996 with excellent order books. At the pre-tax level, profits rose to £22.13 million, from £18.1 million, after a £7 million charge against the settlement of a dispute with Slough Trading Estates and a £1 million write-off after the disposal of an Australian subsidiary. Earnings were 5.04p a share (4.38p). The total dividend rises to 3.6p a share from 3.4p, with a final 2.23p due on June 5.

### Jobs boost at L&G

MORE than 400 jobs will be created in Cardiff over the next three years as Legal & General establishes its UK-wide phone sales and advice centre in the city. The company's £10 million investment is assisted by a £2 million regional selective grant from the Welsh Office. Recruitment is expected to begin after Easter. The centre will provide advice on a wide variety of Legal & General products including investments, private health insurance, mortgages, life insurance and pensions.

### Gas output at new high

OFFSHORE gas output rose by nearly 7 per cent last month to its highest level yet, helped by the cold weather and increased demand from gas-fired power stations. Its low price also led to increased demand from industrial users. The biggest rise in output came in the Morecambe field, which accounted for 17 per cent of production. The figures, in the Royal Bank of Scotland's North Sea oil and gas index report, showed that oil production last month fell by 0.5 per cent to 2.57 million barrels a day.

### Baird profits dive

PROFITS at William Baird, the clothing company that is a supplier to Marks & Spencer, fell sharply to £10.3 million before tax in 1995 from £25.1 million previously, affected by a tough trading environment, an increase in raw material prices, and abnormal weather patterns. There was a £9.8 million charge against restructuring. The total dividend is held at 9.35p a share, with an unchanged 5.8p final due on July 4, payable from earnings of 5.4p (14.8p).

### Germany pegs rates

THE Bundesbank yesterday left key German interest rates unchanged. At its policy-making council meeting, the last before the German central bank's Easter break, the discount rate was kept at 3 per cent, the Lombard emergency financing rate at 5 per cent and the key money market repurchase rate at 3.3 per cent. The M3 measure of money supply grew at an annualised rate of 12.6 per cent in February, well above the 7 per cent ceiling of a target range.

## The Standard Life Assurance Company Annual General Meeting

The 170th Annual General Meeting of the Company will be held in the Head Office, 3 George Street, Edinburgh on Tuesday 23 April 1996 at 2.30pm.

A member entitled to attend and vote is entitled to appoint a proxy to attend and vote. A proxy need not be a member.

By order of the Board of Directors  
D M Simpson  
Secretary  
Edinburgh, 28 March 1996

Policymakers may obtain a copy of the Annual Report and Accounts, including the agenda, by writing to the Customer Service Information Team at PO Box 141, 1 Tanfield, Edinburgh EH3 5RG or by telephoning (0131) 245 2668. Proxy forms may be similarly obtained by members entitled to vote.

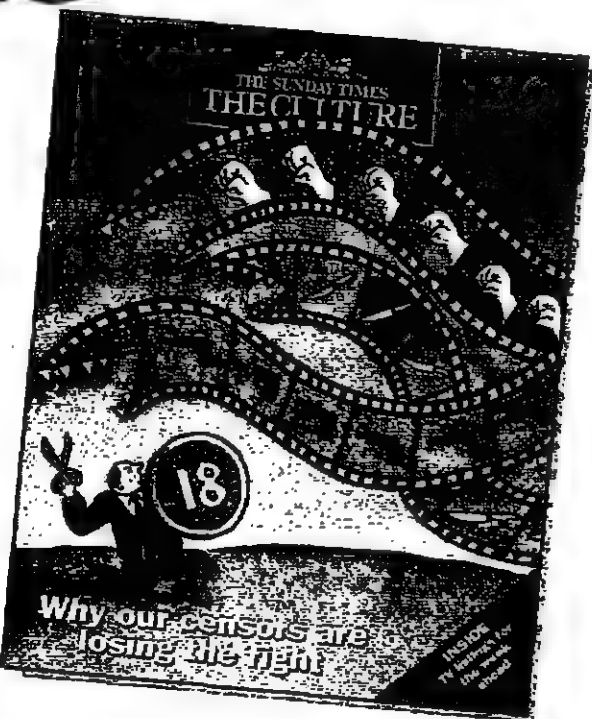
STANDARD LIFE

## THE SUNDAY TIMES

# CENSORS FAIL US

The British Board of Film Classification is intellectually inconsistent, socially confused and institutionally perverse

Bryan Appleyard, Feature Writer of the Year, on why film and video censorship isn't working — in *The Culture on Sunday*



## 5,000 TICKETS FOR MIGHTY APHRODITE

Woody Allen's latest movie, *Mighty Aphrodite*, which produced a best supporting actress Oscar for Mira Sorvino (pictured), hits Britain next month. The Sunday Times has 2,500 pairs of tickets to bewon for pre-release screenings around the country

### PLUS

Snap up videos of classic movies for just £2.99 including post and packing



THE SUNDAY TIMES IS THE SUNDAY PAPERS



□ The triumph of United Utilities □ Zooming in on a once unpopular sector □ Hotels group struggles to return to normal

## The dangers of success

□ THERE are times when it is impolite to boast too loudly about a success, and times when it can be downright dangerous. You do not have to be a newly unemployed electrician pounding the streets of Manchester in search of a job to feel unhappy about yesterday's display of ruthless cost-cutting from the local water and electricity company.

Previous waves of job losses in electricity in the five years since privatisation were to benefit shareholders and customers alike. By contrast, the £140 million in cost cuts by the year 2000 trumpeted by United Utilities will go almost in their entirety to investors, in the form of dividends running at least 11 per cent above inflation. There is only an informal promise to share any unexpected bounty from the merger, over and above that level, with customers.

The bills for water and power will continue to climb, under the existing regulatory regime that will not change until the millennium. Only then will the customers start to see some reward from Sir Desmond Pitcher's grand dream. This was, it must be admitted, derided by many when announced last year, and yesterday's triumphal procession was clearly designed to show that the financial advantages will be far higher than even the optimists then envisaged.

On a more negative tack, the merger has left United Utilities with hefty debt and the need to raise £350 million by the sale of a rag-bag of former Norweb businesses to keep this under control. What price, in today's trading climate, for a collection of shops selling electricity appliances? Even Hanson, after all, was reduced to giving them away.

The consequence of the creation of this monster in the North West will almost certainly be more water/power mergers, if only because shareholders will demand nothing less. The rise in United Utilities' share price yesterday with which the City celebrated the mass sackings was matched by another jump for Hyder, the renamed Welsh Water-South Wales Electricity amalgam. This message will not be lost on others in both sectors, especially those in areas like London and Yorkshire where the local water and electricity companies make a good overlap. Likewise Eastern, once demerged from Hanson, might take an interest in Anglia Water.

And yet. And yet. Any utility with any sense has of late been

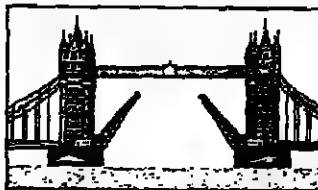
trying to look as benign and cuddly as possible in the eyes of a possible future Labour government. The current electricity regulator has shown himself willing to redraw his pricing regime if he feels he did not get it right first time around.

New Labour, if in government, will have the perfect ideological excuse to tighten the screw — indeed, most market strategists are factoring a harsher climate for the utilities into their recommendations for investing under a Blair government. Shouting from the rooftops about just how good you are at sacking people might not look too clever then.

### Cable no longer a pipe-dream

□ THE cable business, hitherto seen as a disaster waiting to happen, is showing some startling signs of life. International CableTel is paying as much as £235 million for NTL. Several international phone giants, among them Deutsche Telekom and AT&T, may end up squabbling over

### PENNINGTON



Videotron, the cable operator whose franchises cover the City of London and Westminster.

The very idea of a bidding war seemed absurd a few months ago, when every cable share was trading at well below its issue price. Some were even wondering if the various parents, mostly American and Canadian, would have to give the franchises away to avoid additional billions in capital expenditures with no returns in sight.

So what has changed? The telecoms and media industries are coming to the conclusion that direct access to the residential consumer is the key. They may be right. Mercury is struggling precisely because it lacks that access. For years it has

debated linking with the cable companies but did not act quickly enough. Similarly, BT, now back in talks with Cable and Wireless, has come to regret selling most of its cable franchises. True, it has the most extensive network, but one that is largely composed of low-capacity copper lines. To work well, services such as video-on-demand need to be hooked into a high-capacity broadband network of the sort that the cable companies are close to creating.

On that basis, the cable companies are rare commodities. Any company that wants to build a multimedia business in Britain can no longer afford to ignore them. This is why Deutsche Telekom and AT&T are so interested in Videotron. A cable company would provide them with a quick way into the market and a platform to create a business to compete with BT. The impending merger of CableTel and NTL is a variation on the same theme. The two companies can combine a national transmission system with residential access. Think of it as a smaller version of BT.

The cable sector's darkest days may now be behind it. Digging up all those streets is starting to make sense.

### Queens Moat in a quandary

□ WE are getting used to having the former walking dead, the Cordians and WPPs, back among us restored to rude health. But Queens Moat Houses has shown that not every financial restructuring has a happy ending.

The company is in a quandary. Three years ago it was bust, the shares heading for a long suspension. Last year's debt-for-equity swap still left Queens Moat with £1 billion-plus of borrowings, and little chance of paying it off through assets sales, as the last property valuation threw up a total worth that was short of £900 million.

The obvious way out, as demonstrated by Cordiant last year, is a rights issue. But Queens Moat as yet lacks the earnings recovery to buttress such an issue. Last year, but for

debt forgiveness associated with the restructuring, would have seen a pre-tax loss. This year, assuming even a 10 per cent rise in operating profits, these will be wiped out by the interest bills. Banking covenants require a pre-tax profit by 1997; this is possible, but any earnings will be nominal.

Unfounded bid optimism has pushed the shares higher of late. Any potential buyer, and several have been mooted, will have to swallow the debt. The most likely outcome is another highly dilutive debt/equity swap, albeit perhaps to some disposals. Investors please note.

### Cut-off point

□ THE deeply loathed South West Water is freshening up its image with a promise that customers who fail to pay will never be cut off, because this is bad for "family health and well-being". Instead, they are offered debt counselling, and only those that refuse go to court — where they may ultimately be jailed, a process known to be excellent for family health and well-being. Some advice for South West. As other water companies have found, cutting off the supply is actually the easiest way of dealing with the majority of non-payers, those too lazy or disorganised to get around to it.

### Shake-up at Slough Estates

Sir Nigel Mobbs is giving up the role of chief executive of Slough Estates in a management shake-up of the industrial property group, but will remain executive chairman. Roger Carey, joint managing director, is leaving the company while Derek Wilson, also joint managing director, is being promoted to chief executive.

The boardroom reshuffle was announced as Slough revealed a 10.5 per cent rise in profits to £70.7 million, but the value of the investment portfolio is down 3.1 per cent. Slough's net asset value fell from 276p to 266p, and the full year dividend rises 4.9 per cent to 8.5p per share.

### Gehe bid referred

The £650 million takeover bid by Gehe, the German drug wholesaler, of Britain's Lloyds Chemists, has been referred to the Monopolies and Mergers Commission by John Taylor, the Competition Minister. The MMC will consider the bid alongside the rival £623 million offer by Unichem, Britain's third-biggest chemist, which was referred to the commission last month.

### Packager up

Macfarlane Group (Clansman), the packaging group based in Glasgow, lifted pre-tax profits to £21.2 million last year from £16.3 million in 1994. Turnover was 36 per cent higher at £158.6 million. Raw material prices were higher and acquisitions made a £9.8 million contribution. Earnings rose to 12.03p a share (9.1p). The total dividend rises 24.6 per cent to 3.9p a share, with a final 2.5p due on May 30.

## Landfill business sale boosts Blue Circle profit

BY SARAH CUNNINGHAM

BLUE CIRCLE, the building and heating group which last month said it would cut up to 1,300 jobs, yesterday reported a pre-tax profit of £263.8 million for last year, compared to £184.4 million in 1994. Its results were boosted by a £54 million gain on the sale of its landfill business to South West Water last July. Against this, £55 million was set aside to overhaul its heating business, including £30 million for redundancy payments, and £8

million for its bathrooms business. In 1994 the company's results were depressed by an exceptional charge of £59.4 million. The company is recommending a full-year dividend of 12.5p, up from 11.75p last year. Its shares rose 12p to 335p, responding to the company's stated determination to turn its heating business around.

As widely predicted, heating was its worst performer last year, making an operating

profit of £17.1 million compared to £42.4 in 1994. Blue Circle blamed difficult markets in the UK and continental Europe. It said that restructuring should mean savings of £9 million this year and £25 million per year thereafter. It would not comment on its plans for job cuts, saying complex negotiations were continuing.

The UK cement division made a marginally higher operating profit last year, up 1.9 per cent to £65.3 million, despite lower volumes. Blue Circle, which is putting its cement prices up on April 1, said it expects the market to improve in the second half of this year, as the demand for new houses increases.

In the US, operating profits were up 30.7 per cent to £63.5 million, helped by a building boom around Atlanta, Georgia as it prepares for this summer's Olympics. Other markets, including Chile, Malaysia, Singapore and Africa, brought in good returns.

The company's bathrooms business, which includes Armitage Shanks and Qualitas and Italy's Ceramica Dolomite, saw operating profits up 6.3 per cent to £27 million despite difficult market conditions.

"We managed to turn bathrooms around and are absolutely confident that we can do the same with heating," Keith Orrell-Jones, chief executive, said.

Mr Orrell-Jones added that the company had "an open mind about acquisitions". He said it would be unlikely to make any major buys, but was looking actively in various parts of the world for small-scale opportunities.



Sir Peter Walters, chairman, with Keith Orrell-Jones

### Morrison upbeat on 9.5% rise

WM MORRISON, the supermarket chain, was upbeat on prospects yesterday as it unveiled a 9.5 per cent rise in pre-tax profits to £127.1 million in the 53 weeks to February 4 (Sarah Bagnall writes).

Turnover topped £2 billion for the first time, up from £1.8 billion to £2.1 billion. Ken Morrison, chairman, said: "It is pleasing to state that this was achieved in a period of extreme price competition. We look forward to the future with confidence."

Without the extra week, sales rose 16 per cent with like-for-like sales up 2.9 per cent. The final dividend of 1.125p, payable on May 15, makes a total for the year of 1.4p. Earnings per share rose 7.7 per cent to 10.67p. Shares rose 3½p to 154½p.

### Buoyant Next talks of growth

BY SARAH BAGNALL

LORD WOLFSON, chairman of Next, yesterday said the clothing retailer could use its £170 million cash pile to fund an acquisition.

He said that, if the group handed back surplus cash to shareholders, "we couldn't make a significant acquisition without issuing paper or going to the bank".

He said the group had not found a suitable target but would be interested in buying a business that offered synergies and was one that the Next management understood and could add value to immediately. His remarks came as Next unveiled a 32 per cent leap in profits and a 28 per cent rise in the final dividend, news that sent the shares up 15½p to 494½p.

Pre-tax profits rose to a record £141.9 million in the year to January 27, while

trading profits rose 22.4 per cent to £125.3 million, helped by strong performances from the group's 304 stores and its mail order business.

Sales advanced 18.5 per cent to £773.8 million, reflecting a 15 per cent rise in Next Retail sales and a 26 per cent leap in Next Directory sales. The directory attracted 25 per cent more customers last year.

The company said it is pulling out of its Bath & Body Works joint venture with The Limited, of the US. The stores are a Body Shop rival. Next is putting on hold its expansion plans in America but continuing with those for the Far East and Middle East.

The final dividend, due July 1, is being lifted from 6.25p to 8p, making a total for the year of 11.75p, against 9p last time.

Tempus, page 28

### Demerger costs less at Thorn

SHARES in Thorn EMI, the music and electronics company, rose 19p to £16.73 after the company said costs for its £7 billion demerger would be around 25 per cent less than expected at £75 million (Alasdair Murray writes).

The company will charge costs, including tax costs of about £25 million and others of around £50 million, as an exceptional in its accounts. Thorn is also making a further £55 million operating charge for restructuring programmes.

Thorn dropped plans to list EMI in New York but will review the situation next year. The rentals division will be part listed on Nasdaq to allow share-based incentives for its US workforce. Demerger is now set for August 16.

## Redland writes down US assets

BY CARL MORTISHED

SHARES in Redland fell yesterday when the building materials group announced that it was writing down the value of its American businesses by £98 million. Weak trading conditions in the UK and overseas, including a sharp decline in the German housing market in the second half, eroded Redland's profits. Combined with the charge against the American businesses, Redland's pre-tax profits fell from £373 million to £273 million. The shares fell by 8p, to 384p.

The net exceptional charge of £81.9 million includes a £16 million writedown of the US roof tiles business and a £16.4 million gain from disposals, but the bulk of the loss relates to a severe cut in the book value of Genstar, Redland's Maryland aggregates operation.

Robert Napier, chief executive of Redland, said that the business had suffered from the slowdown in the Maryland and Baltimore economy.

Redland expects to announce next month a deal restructuring its European businesses. Mr Napier said he had

achieved a breakthrough in negotiations with the Braas family, minority shareholders in Redland's German subsidiary. The deal, involving injecting the entire European roofing business into Braas in exchange for cash and an increase in Redland's shareholding to about 60 per cent, "will remove geographical barriers and allow more efficient use of capital", Mr Napier said.

Redland is also expected to announce a buyer for its bricks business next month. The company has four interested parties, thought to include Boral, the Australian group and Wienerberger, of Austria.

Mr Napier said that poor weather in Europe is worsening weak markets.

Poor volumes in bricks and tiles in the UK led to a decline in domestic operating profits last year from £41 million to £35 million. German volumes for concrete tiles fell by 10 per cent.

The dividend is down from 19.42p to 16.67p after an unchanged 11.7p final payment.

Tempus, page 28

This notice is issued in compliance with the requirements of London Stock Exchange Listing Rule 9.12. It does not constitute an offer or invitation to any person to subscribe for or purchase any shares. Application has been made to the London Stock Exchange for up to 30,000,000 "C" Shares of £1 each in Montanaro UK Smaller Companies Investment Trust PLC ("C" Shares) to be admitted to the Listing to be admitted to the Official List. It is expected that such admission will become effective and that dealings in the "C" Shares will commence on 12 April 1996.

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Share capital following the Placing		Issued and fully paid*	
Authorised	Number	£	Number
1,000,000	60,000,000	Ordinary Shares of 10p each	2,500,000
30,000,000	30,000,000	"C" Shares of £1 each	30,000,000

\*On the basis that the maximum number of "C" Shares are subscribed pursuant to the Placing

Copies of the listing particulars published on 28 March 1996 are available for collection during normal business hours on any weekday (Saturday and public holidays excepted) up to and including 1 April 1996 from the Company Announcements Office, London Stock Exchange Tower, Capel Court entrance, off Bartholomew Lane, London (for collection only) and until 12 April 1996 from:

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Ref. No. 70020



STOCK MARKET MICHAEL CLAR



**David Jones, managing director of Next, saw shares rise**

century. It also plans to dispose of Norweb's retail and contracting arm, North West's processing arm, and Norweb's investment in Generation, which should raise around £350 million. Nasdaq trading system. An impressive set of full-year figures left Next sporting a rise of 15p to 494½p. Pre-tax profits came in above most forecasts at £142 million, compared with £107 million last

The outline of the savings expected to accrue at United Utilities also sent shares of Hyder, the subject of a merger between Welsh Water and

Pan Andean Resources, which is looking for oil in Bolivia, fell 11p to 70p for a two-day loss of 23p. The group's partner in the Chapare venture, BHP, is expected to issue a report next month. Remember the helter skelter performance of Poseidon in the Seventies? In this instance polite brokers merely describe the downside as limited.

**KINGFISHER: BROKERS TAKE BULLISH VIEW OF PROSPECTS**

Year	Price Index
1980	820
1981	840
1982	830
1983	860
1984	880

CRUDE OILS (\$/barrel FOB)			
Brent 15 day (May)	19.95	-1.30	
Brent 15 day (May)	18.95	-0.50	
Brent 15 day (Jun)	18.00	-0.65	
WTI Texas Intermediate (May)	21.15	-0.25	
WTI Texas Intermediate (Jun)	19.75	-0.60	
PRODUCTS (\$/MT)			
Spot CIF NW Europe (gross/deliv)			
Premium Gas. IS	B 204 (+3)	Q 306 (+4)	
Central Eur. IS	B 204 (+3)	Q 306 (+4)	
Non EEC 1st May	199 (-14)	201 (-4)	
Non EEC 1st Jun	178 (-7)	180 (-5)	
IS Fuel Oil 1st May	104 (-10)	104 (-10)	
Naphtha	183 (+1)	185 (+1)	
PIPE FUTURES (GNI LE)			
GAS OIL			
Apr	188.00-92.25	Jan	159.50 SLM
May	170.75-71.10	Aug	157.50-57.75
Jun	163.00-63.23	Dec	156.00
Brent (\$/bbl)			
May	18.98-19.04	Aug	17.00-17.07
Jun	18.00-18.03	Sept	16.87-16.90
Oct	17.30-17.40	Nov	16.74
		Dec	16.74
GNI LONDON CRUDE FUTURES			
WHEAT		BARLEY	
June 1st	July 1st	June 1st	July 1st
May	127.50	May	110.80
Jun	127.00	Jun	109.60
Nov	111.30	Nov	110.40
Nov	112.75	Jan	110.45
Jan	114.45	Jan	111.40
Volume: 90		Volume: 78	
POTATO R/B			
	Open	Close	
May	158.0	167.0	
Jun	160.0	172.0	
Jul	162.0	175.0	
RUBBER (No 1 RSS-SC-10)			
	Open	Close	
May	103.50-105.00		
BIFEXX (GNI LE \$98/pt)			
	Open	Close	
Apr	96	1900	1428
May	1460	1489	1451
Jun	1356	1330	1330
Oct	1370	1363	1367
Nov	1370		
Oct 20th		Open Interest	5327
		Index	1448 9/15
LONDON METAL EXCHANGE			
	Cash	25th	25th
Copper Date (\$/tonne)	2840.00-2580.00	2580.00-2570.00	2570.00
Lead (\$/tonne)	814.00-814.00	798.00-798.00	798.50
Alum. 99.95 H Grade (\$/tonne)	1618.00-1618.00	1608.00-1608.00	1608.50
Tin (\$/tonne)	6345.00-6355.00	6305.00-6375.00	6370.00
Aluminium H Grade (\$/tonne)	1638.00-1638.00	1609.00-1609.00	1422.50
Zinc (\$/tonne)	1618.00-1618.00	1609.00-1609.00	1422.50
Alum. 99.95 H Grade (\$/tonne)	1638.00-1638.00	1609.00-1609.00	1422.50

LIFE OPTICS																	
Series	Cals				Pms				Series	Cals				Pms			
	Jan	Oct	Apr	Dec	Jan	Oct	Apr	Dec		Jan	Oct	Apr	Dec	Jan	Oct	Apr	Dec
BAA	502	344	43	525	1	8	12		Abby Nat	599	35	485	364	14	249	28	
(5329)	590	3	15	30	1	31	39		(5329)	600	126	23	33	425	51	39	
(5330)	590	25	15	30	1	31	39		(5330)	600	126	23	33	425	51	39	
(5331)	600	25	15	30	1	31	39		(5331)	600	126	23	33	425	51	39	
(5332)	600	25	15	30	1	31	39		(5332)	600	126	23	33	425	51	39	
(5333)	600	25	15	30	1	31	39		(5333)	600	126	23	33	425	51	39	
(5334)	600	25	15	30	1	31	39		(5334)	600	126	23	33	425	51	39	
(5335)	600	25	15	30	1	31	39		(5335)	600	126	23	33	425	51	39	
(5336)	600	25	15	30	1	31	39		(5336)	600	126	23	33	425	51	39	
(5337)	600	25	15	30	1	31	39		(5337)	600	126	23	33	425	51	39	
(5338)	600	25	15	30	1	31	39		(5338)	600	126	23	33	425	51	39	
(5339)	600	25	15	30	1	31	39		(5339)	600	126	23	33	425	51	39	
(5340)	600	25	15	30	1	31	39		(5340)	600	126	23	33	425	51	39	
(5341)	600	25	15	30	1	31	39		(5341)	600	126	23	33	425	51	39	
(5342)	600	25	15	30	1	31	39		(5342)	600	126	23	33	425	51	39	
(5343)	600	25	15	30	1	31	39		(5343)	600	126	23	33	425	51	39	
(5344)	600	25	15	30	1	31	39		(5344)	600	126	23	33	425	51	39	
(5345)	600	25	15	30	1	31	39		(5345)	600	126	23	33	425	51	39	
(5346)	600	25	15	30	1	31	39		(5346)	600	126	23	33	425	51	39	
(5347)	600	25	15	30	1	31	39		(5347)	600	126	23	33	425	51	39	
(5348)	600	25	15	30	1	31	39		(5348)	600	126	23	33	425	51	39	
(5349)	600	25	15	30	1	31	39		(5349)	600	126	23	33	425	51	39	
(5350)	600	25	15	30	1	31	39		(5350)	600	126	23	33	425	51	39	
(5351)	600	25	15	30	1	31	39		(5351)	600	126	23	33	425	51	39	
(5352)	600	25	15	30	1	31	39		(5352)	600	126	23	33	425	51	39	
(5353)	600	25	15	30	1	31	39										

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22%	21%	Sumo	120%	120%
		Yellow Corp	12%	12%



## THE TIMES CITY DIARY

### All in a shorter day's work

SIR Nicholas Goodison, chairman of TSB, was quick to put his name down for the first national "Go Home On Time Day", which is being organised by the charity Parents At Work. Appropriately scheduled for the longest day of the year, midsummer, on June 21, employers and employees are being encouraged to enjoy life as it should be.

Sir Nicholas said: "Burning the midnight oil in the office doesn't necessarily bring the best results. It's the quality of work that matters. We will not get the best out of someone who has no time for family life or the pursuit of outside interests."

Howard Davies, Deputy Governor of the Bank of England and a patron of Parents At Work, is another who will go home on time. He cites "children and cricket" as his recreations in *Who's Who*.



Sir Nicholas: home early

AFTER the Oscars, there's the Tommy's Campaign Parent Friendly Awards, sponsored by Huggies Nappies. This year's Big Dummy Award, for the least effort to help young families, went to the out-of-town store Children's World. It excelled in unfriendly staff, grubby changing rooms, difficult access to stores and making customers pay for their trolleys. *Abbey National* was voted top rusk for its Lego tables.

### Stumped

WHEN Laurence Dillamore worked as director of general insurance at Johnson Fry, until a year ago, he was one of only two MCC members. And because only MCC members could apply for the debarment scheme that part of the modernisation of the Mound Stand at Lords in 1987, Dillamore was prevailed upon to secure precious seats. Now around the renewal date of the debarment, Johnson Fry talks all the more sweetly to its old chum, and Dillamore keeps the partners sweating.

### Tight fit

SPARE a thought for Mark Riches, the chief executive of the Sweater Shop, who was in Guildford last weekend for the opening of the 63rd Sweater Shop. Mr Riches had placed the keys of his BMW car in the hands of a valet-parker at the Angel Hotel. He awoke the next day to find his car had been written off as a result of some rather over-enthusiastic parking.

### Emerald urn

WORRIED at the thought that their daily pint could be in short supply, milk drinkers could soon be turning to Yakult. The Japanese makers of the caramel-coloured liquid, which comes from Irish cows and contains around 6.5 billion "friendly" bugs per 65ml bottle, enjoy a £1 billion turnover. They claim that the health drink is enjoyed by more than 23 million people every day in 15 countries to "help promote a positive internal flora"... and there are 52,000 Yakult saleswomen.

MORAG PRESTON



Gillian Shephard says: "Jobs are being created in Britain because the right conditions exist for companies to flourish"

## A lesson from Britain in cutting unemployment

Philip Bassett looks at a shift in attitude among OECD countries

Twenty-four million people are currently out of work in the world's richest countries. Leaders and officials from those seven states will from today be arriving in Lille, a tough industrial city in north-eastern France, to talk about what to do about it.

So what? Two years ago, in the even tougher US city of Detroit, leaders of the Group of Seven nations — the US, Japan, Germany, France, Italy, Canada and the UK — did the same thing, at a jobs summit convened by President Clinton. Since then, far from falling, unemployment in many of the world's leading countries — France and Germany in particular — has started rising again, making a mockery of the formal target adopted by the European Union, for instance, of halving its unemployment to 5 per cent by 2000.

Except, of course, in Britain. Gillian Shephard, the Employment and Education Secretary, says that Britain is "forging ahead" of the rest of Europe on jobs, with unemployment in the UK down by three quarters of a million since 1992. "Jobs are being created in Britain," she says, with some pride, "because the right conditions exist for companies to flourish."

In spite of yesterday's announcement of 1,700 jobs going at United Utilities, hard on the heels of 1,900 jobs being cut by Pilkington, Treasury officials believe that the Government's reforms of the UK labour market will allow UK unemployment to fall still further from its present level of 7.9 per cent, to perhaps below 6 per cent, without fuelling inflation.

Such music to ministers' ears is coupled with warnings, though, from the OECD and others, of the social impact of people being excluded from the economy in Britain. One such warning sounded in Brussels yesterday at the EU's first European Social Policy Forum.

Tony Blair, the Labour leader, is casting doubt on Britain's jobs record by warning of "rampant insecurity", with more than ten million people in Britain experiencing at least one spell of unemployment since the 1992 election. The Independent Employment Policy Institute will say that job growth in Britain has certainly not been spectacular by international standards. Incomes Data Services, the independent labour market research body, says: "While the jobless rate has declined, UK performance on job creation is less convincing."

Undaunted in speeches and

interviews — including an address to the French CBI in Paris — Mrs Shephard has already been banging the international drum about the UK's job performance. Some countries attending the G7 summit are wary that they will be subjected to more — much more — of the same as Britain extols its approach at the expense of others, although Whitehall officials insist in their best mandarin manner that British ministers will not do anything so maladroit, though they certainly will make clear what they regard as a distinctive UK success on jobs. The illustration shows the G7 countries' recent unemployment record and projections. Other countries' interest in the British model on jobs

stability and fiscal adjustment, and do not believe either that the claimed deflationary effects — especially in terms of increasing unemployment — of Maastricht convergence will be contentious at Lille either.

In Detroit, Robert Reich, the US Labour Secretary, warned people that when they heard the word flexibility, they should watch their wallets. Now, Britain's model of flexible labour markets is the one which appears to be delivering the jobs everyone says they want to see. Even Germany, with unemployment now above four million, and France — both bastions of the "European" model of regulated labour markets — are moving towards Britain's stance. Indeed, in his

opening plenary address at Lille, Jacques Chirac, the French President, who is now promoting his ideas of a new social model for Europe and will outline them at the

opening of the inter-governmental conference in Turin today, is expected to use the jobs summit to present the issue of flexible labour markets to the French people. Their scepticism about such an approach triggered a wave of strikes against the Chirac Government's welfare plans at the end of last year.

President Chirac, though, is also expected to chart the progress of another issue dear to the hearts of those enamoured of the interventionist model: the so-called "social clause" attached to trade treaties, requiring trading countries to observe certain workers' rights. At the main pre-Lille meeting in Paris this month, Britain

### UNEMPLOYMENT RATE

	1994 %	1995 %	1996 %	1997 %
Canada	10.3	9.6	9.2	8.6
France	12.3	11.5	11.3	11
Germany	8.4	9.2	9.3	9.1
Italy	11.1	11.9	11.6	11.2
Japan	2.9	3.1	3.4	3.4
UK	9.5	8.4	8.2	8
USA	6	5.6	5.7	5.9
G7	7	6.9	6.9	6.8

Source: OECD \* Projection

### BUSINESS LETTERS

#### Chartered surveyors come under pressure from banks

From Mr Ian V. Oddy  
Sir, In your business pages ("Bankers driven to risk new crisis", March 27) you refer to the bankers' fear that they are being driven by intense competition to take unacceptable risks that will trigger the next banking crisis.

I have recently given two lectures on risk management to other chartered surveyors, one meeting in Birmingham and another in London. In Birmingham I was told of

pressure being applied to chartered surveyors by building societies who required the surveyors to increase their mortgage valuations. In London I was told of similar pressure being applied to chartered surveyors but this time by banks. In both cases domestic property was involved.

Taking unacceptable risks was a contributory cause of the last banking crisis. Through your paper I

would suggest that chartered surveyors communicate with the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors if they are being subjected to such pressure.

Yours faithfully,  
IAN V. ODDY  
St Quintin  
Chartered Surveyors  
71 Queen Victoria Street, EC4.

Letters to the Business section can be sent by fax on 0171-782 5112.

#### Dedoubleddutching BP's annual reports

From T.H. Hughes-Davies  
Sir, It is good to know that in Grangemouth, BP has started dedoubleddutching the major ethylene cracker (BP annual report and accounts 1995, page 19).

Can we look forward to it dedoubleddutching the man-

agement babble which has crept into its annual report?

Yours faithfully  
T.H. HUGHES-DAVIES,  
Shades Cottage,  
Breamore,  
Fordingbridge,  
Hampshire.

#### Funding Lloyd's reconstruction and renewal

From T.C.M. Powell  
Sir, I have read with great interest the letters from various Lloyd's names. I calculate that if R and R succeeds, I shall have contributed about 10 per cent of my total annual average premium income over the past four years to the two

opposed the inclusion on the Lloyd's agenda of a discussion on the social clause, supported by Germany and Japan.

However, buoyed by falling unemployment in Britain, in spite of last month's unexpected 6,800 rise, and the continuing wave of job losses, UK officials insist that agreement is much more likely than division at Lille, with the Americans, British, French and Germans now much closer together on jobs than they have sometimes been in the past.

Britain, apart from being of interest to other countries, is itself interested in some other countries' developments, especially the proposals being sketched out in the US by Mr Reich on corporate responsibility on employment.

Mr Reich, who has clashed repeatedly with some of his US Cabinet colleagues and who some say is talking privately about not wanting to remain in office if President Clinton is re-elected in November, will be at Lille together with Ron Brown, the US Trade Secretary. But he is said to be largely uninterested in the G7 meeting, partly because of the emphasis likely to be given to the British route to job success: while he and his advisers acknowledge its impact, they are dismissive about the kind of jobs — and their real economic value — that it is creating.

Faced with continual downgrading in US companies, Mr Reich is talking instead, in familiar Clinton-Blair terms, of mutual gains and responsibilities: of the private sector taking steps which may not immediately help its own bottom line, but which benefit people and society more generally. Specifically, he is suggesting tax breaks for companies which train, retrain and share their profits — much as Mr Blair, in a smaller way, proposed yesterday in Labour's new training plans.

Britain believes that most countries will be more interested in Britain's job creation record than in Mr Reich's theories. Ministers and officials now claim that Detroit largely endorsed the UK's flexible labour markets theory, at a time when the UK economy looked less successful than they claim it now is. If that doesn't quite atone with everyone's memory of Detroit, it is a more likely prediction for the outcome of Lille. Job Summit 2 will not find the answer to unemployment, but Britain is convinced — and, increasingly, other countries are too — that it has more of the answer than anyone else.

## No nostalgia for last of the Bernsteins

The chairman of  
Granada is  
bowing out on  
a high, writes  
Jon Ashworth

If Alex Bernstein is nursing a sore head this morning, don't be too harsh. Some 200 celebrities and friends toasted his health at the Savoy Hotel last night, ahead of his retirement, today, his 60th birthday, as chairman of Granada Group, the television-to-hotels empire founded by his grandfather more than 70 years ago. For the first time, there will not be a Bernstein on the Granada board.

Mr Bernstein steps down in favour of Gerry Robinson, who ascends to the chairmanship fresh from doing battle with Sir Rocco Forte, vanquished head of the eponymous hotels-to-catering group. Charles Allen replaces Mr Robinson as group chief executive. Mr Bernstein was well aware that his last annual meeting as chairman might have taken on a sombre tone. "In truth, I never thought we would lose. One can empathise with Rocco. It's not much fun having your company taken away from you."

Mr Bernstein will retain a stake of just short of a million shares in Granada, providing a handy retirement income, but has decided against taking the honorary title of president, in the mould of Lord Forte or Lord King. He believes a clean break is best. "I think people who become president are often chairmen who don't want to leave office. I've had a wonderful time at Granada, but after 36 years, 16 of them as chairman, it's time to do something else."

Mr Bernstein left Cambridge with an economics degree in 1959, and struggled to carve a niche in what was very much a family firm. His uncle, Lord (Sidney) Bernstein, who died in 1993, transformed Granada from a crack company with a couple of cinemas to a colossus embracing television rentals, motorway restaurants, and TV productions such as *Coronation Street*.

and *World In Action*. His first job was as assistant manager of the Century cinema at Clapham Junction, now a Tesco supermarket. He missed out on running "the posh one", the nearby Granada cinema, and was soon brought down to earth. "It was quite a culture shock coming from the academic world of Cambridge economics to running a children's matinee at Clapham Junction."

After two to three years, he moved to Manchester to work in television, and spent a few years in production before going "upstairs" into management. "With a name like Bernstein, I didn't have a great deal of choice, I suppose." He moved into TV rentals, later becoming managing director of the rentals operation.

Mr Bernstein has fond memories of his flamboyant uncle Sidney, a man with a deeply litigious streak, and a virulent dislike of employees who wore suede shoes. Lord Bernstein once tried to sue Ford for adopting the name Granada for one of its models. "He was not the easiest man to work for," says Bernstein, casting a casual eye over my brogues, "but he was a brilliant businessman with extraordinary vision and courage."

"He was a great one for Manchester, but never actually lived there himself. We were walking there one day, and he spotted a dandelion emerging through a crack in the pavement. He said: 'Look, Alex. Wild flowers growing in the centre of Manchester.'"

Mr Bernstein has been chairman since 1979, making

him one of the longest-serving chairmen of a FT-SE 100 company. In that time, Granada's turnover has grown from £200 million to £6 billion, although expansion has brought its problems. "We were caught up in the euphoria of the Eighties and bought quite a few companies, but didn't buy wisely or run them very well."

An ill-fated rights issue in 1991 led to the departure, as chief executive, of Derek Lewin, later head of the Prison Service, and the arrival of the much-admired Mr Robinson. It is an appointment of which Mr Bernstein is justifiably proud. "I think choosing Gerry was one of the best things I did for Granada. He's one of the outstanding businessmen of the 1990s. Apart from that, he's great fun to work with."

Mr Bernstein, an avid gardener, is looking forward to pottering around the garden at home in Berkshire (there is also a flat in London). He is a long-standing partner in the Waddington Galleries in London, and has bought many contemporary works of art. A keen skier, he confesses to spending more time in restaurants than on the slopes these days. "The trick is still to be able to pull up with a flourish."

There will, undoubtedly, be some sadness at the passing of the "Last of the Bernsteins", but nostalgia has little place in the modern world of commerce, as Forte has discovered to his cost. "A family business can't remain that way for too long. It is entirely inappropriate after a certain time."

Mr Bernstein is optimistic that Granada's family origins will not easily be snuffed out. "Granada does have a relaxed, family feel at the centre, and I believe that Gerry will take it on to even greater things." The timing, he insists, could not be better. "I'm leaving Granada on a high. Purely by luck, I think I've timed my retirement well."



As with his skiing, Alex Bernstein is finishing his run in business with a flourish

## the BUSINESS SECURITY exhibition

"This promises to become the definitive event of its kind in the UK"  
Euan Williamson, Group Security Adviser, The Boots Company Plc

Security purchasing is becoming a complex process as companies increasingly face security issues that cross functional boundaries. Security solutions can have profit-enhancing as well as profit protecting implications — and solutions often have strategic implications that affect the bottom line. In order to make sound security decisions, it is more important than ever that senior security managers remain well-informed as to the emerging options available to them.

The Business Security Exhibition is the perfect opportunity to discuss security solutions relevant to your organisation.

### Exhibition

The Business Security Exhibition is specifically designed for heads of security, security managers, facilities managers and other senior security staff within both the private and public sectors who are responsible for influencing, specifying and sanctioning security expenditure decisions.

The Exhibition is also relevant to IT and Finance Directors and to others for whom an understanding of the 'art of the possible' is increasingly important for the effective setting of security policy.

### Seminars

A comprehensive seminar programme accompanying the exhibition covers all aspects of security. Seminar topics at last year's exhibition included:

- Turning Security into Competitive Advantage - An Evaluation of How Companies Can Use Security in All Its Guises To Gain Competitive Edge - And Save Money
- Contingency Planning: How Will Your Company Cope When It All Falls Apart?
- Internal Barriers to Effective Security - Getting Your Organisation Talking
- Riding the Security Risk to Your Data Centres and Computer Networks
- Workplace Violence - Designing Safe and Secure Work Environments
- Regulation - In-House or Contract Manned Guarding?

\* Seminar speakers included Heads of Security at: British Airways, British Airports Authority, Rolls-Royce, BAT Industries, DEC, Safeway Stores, Woolworths, Argos, House of Fraser, Chase Manhattan Bank, Commercial Union, Prudential and other leading blue-chip UK companies.

the BUSINESS SECURITY exhibition | London, 23rd - 24th October 1996

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Further information from Oakleigh Fischer on 0171-727-7380







# Equities close up a fraction

TRADING PERIOD: Settlement takes place five business days after the day of trade. Changes are calculated on the previous day's close, but adjustments are made when a stock is ex-dividend. Changes, yields and price/earnings ratios are based on middle prices.

ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES									
High	Low	Company	Price	Change	Yield	P/E	High	Low	Company
50.00	49.75	Heineken	50.00	+0.25	4.5%	11.5	120.00	119.50	Heineken
100.00	99.50	Carlsberg	100.00	+0.50	5.0%	12.0	150.00	149.50	Carlsberg
200.00	199.50	Asahi	200.00	+0.50	5.5%	12.5	250.00	249.50	Asahi
300.00	299.50	Daewoo	300.00	+0.50	6.0%	13.0	350.00	349.50	Daewoo
400.00	399.50	Hyundai	400.00	+0.50	6.5%	13.5	450.00	449.50	Hyundai
500.00	499.50	Kia	500.00	+0.50	7.0%	14.0	550.00	549.50	Kia
600.00	599.50	SsangYong	600.00	+0.50	7.5%	14.5	650.00	649.50	SsangYong
700.00	699.50	Yongma	700.00	+0.50	8.0%	15.0	750.00	749.50	Yongma
800.00	799.50	Yongma	800.00	+0.50	8.5%	15.5	850.00	849.50	Yongma
900.00	899.50	Yongma	900.00	+0.50	9.0%	16.0	950.00	949.50	Yongma
1000.00	999.50	Yongma	1000.00	+0.50	9.5%	16.5	1050.00	1049.50	Yongma
BANKS									
10.00	9.95	Bank of America	10.00	+0.05	5.0%	10.0	20.00	19.95	Bank of America
20.00	19.95	Bank of America	20.00	+0.05	5.0%	10.0	30.00	29.95	Bank of America
30.00	29.95	Bank of America	30.00	+0.05	5.0%	10.0	40.00	39.95	Bank of America
40.00	39.95	Bank of America	40.00	+0.05	5.0%	10.0	50.00	49.95	Bank of America
50.00	49.95	Bank of America	50.00	+0.05	5.0%	10.0	60.00	59.95	Bank of America
60.00	59.95	Bank of America	60.00	+0.05	5.0%	10.0	70.00	69.95	Bank of America
70.00	69.95	Bank of America	70.00	+0.05	5.0%	10.0	80.00	79.95	Bank of America
80.00	79.95	Bank of America	80.00	+0.05	5.0%	10.0	90.00	89.95	Bank of America
90.00	89.95	Bank of America	90.00	+0.05	5.0%	10.0	100.00	99.95	Bank of America
100.00	99.95	Bank of America	100.00	+0.05	5.0%	10.0	110.00	109.95	Bank of America
BREWERIES, PUBS & REST									
10.00	9.95	Heineken	10.00	+0.05	4.5%	11.5	20.00	19.95	Heineken
20.00	19.95	Carlsberg	20.00	+0.05	5.0%	12.0	30.00	29.95	Carlsberg
30.00	29.95	Asahi	30.00	+0.05	5.5%	12.5	40.00	39.95	Asahi
40.00	39.95	Daewoo	40.00	+0.05	6.0%	13.0	50.00	49.95	Daewoo
50.00	49.95	Hyundai	50.00	+0.05	6.5%	13.5	60.00	59.95	Hyundai
60.00	59.95	Kia	60.00	+0.05	7.0%	14.0	70.00	69.95	Kia
70.00	69.95	SsangYong	70.00	+0.05	7.5%	14.5	80.00	79.95	SsangYong
80.00	79.95	Yongma	80.00	+0.05	8.0%	15.0	90.00	89.95	Yongma
90.00	89.95	Yongma	90.00	+0.05	8.5%	15.5	100.00	99.95	Yongma
100.00	99.95	Yongma	100.00	+0.05	9.0%	16.0	110.00	109.95	Yongma
DIVERSIFIED INDUSTRIALS									
10.00	9.95	Bank of America	10.00	+0.05	5.0%	10.0	20.00	19.95	Bank of America
20.00	19.95	Bank of America	20.00	+0.05	5.0%	10.0	30.00	29.95	Bank of America
30.00	29.95	Bank of America	30.00	+0.05	5.0%	10.0	40.00	39.95	Bank of America
40.00	39.95	Bank of America	40.00	+0.05	5.0%	10.0	50.00	49.95	Bank of America
50.00	49.95	Bank of America	50.00	+0.05	5.0%	10.0	60.00	59.95	Bank of America
60.00	59.95	Bank of America	60.00	+0.05	5.0%	10.0	70.00	69.95	Bank of America
70.00	69.95	Bank of America	70.00	+0.05	5.0%	10.0	80.00	79.95	Bank of America
80.00	79.95	Bank of America	80.00	+0.05	5.0%	10.0	90.00	89.95	Bank of America
90.00	89.95	Bank of America	90.00	+0.05	5.0%	10.0	100.00	99.95	Bank of America
100.00	99.95	Bank of America	100.00	+0.05	5.0%	10.0	110.00	109.95	Bank of America
ENGINEERING VEHICLES									
10.00	9.95	Bank of America	10.00	+0.05	5.0%	10.0	20.00	19.95	Bank of America
20.00	19.95	Bank of America	20.00	+0.05	5.0%	10.0	30.00	29.95	Bank of America
30.00	29.95	Bank of America	30.00	+0.05	5.0%	10.0	40.00	39.95	Bank of America
40.00	39.95	Bank of America	40.00	+0.05	5.0%	10.0	50.00	49.95	Bank of America
50.00	49.95	Bank of America	50.00	+0.05	5.0%	10.0	60.00	59.95	Bank of America
60.00	59.95	Bank of America	60.00	+0.05	5.0%	10.0	70.00	69.95	Bank of America
70.00	69.95	Bank of America	70.00	+0.05	5.0%	10.0	80.00	79.95	Bank of America
80.00	79.95	Bank of America	80.00	+0.05	5.0%	10.0	90.00	89.95	Bank of America
90.00	89.95	Bank of America	90.00	+0.05	5.0%	10.0	100.00	99.95	Bank of America
100.00	99.95	Bank of America	100.00	+0.05	5.0%	10.0	110.00	109.95	Bank of America
FOOD MANUFACTURERS									
10.00	9.95	Bank of America	10.00	+0.05	5.0%	10.0	20.00	19.95	Bank of America
20.00	19.95	Bank of America	20.00	+0.05	5.0%	10.0	30.00	29.95	Bank of America
30.00	29.95	Bank of America	30.00	+0.05	5.0%	10.0	40.00	39.95	Bank of America
40.00	39.95	Bank of America	40.00	+0.05	5.0%	10.0	50.00	49.95	Bank of America
50.00	49.95	Bank of America	50.00	+0.05	5.0%	10.0	60.00	59.95	Bank of America
60.00	59.95	Bank of America	60.00	+0.05	5.0%	10.0	70.00	69.95	Bank of America
70.00	69.95	Bank of America	70.00	+0.05	5.0%	10.0	80.00	79.95	Bank of America
80.00	79.95	Bank of America	80.00	+0.05	5.0%	10.0	90.00	89.95	Bank of America
90.00	89.95	Bank of America	90.00	+0.05	5.0%	10.0	100.00	99.95	Bank of America
100.00	99.95	Bank of America	100.00	+0.05	5.0%	10.0	110.00	109.95	Bank of America
ELECTRICITY									
10.00	9.95	Bank of America	10.00	+0.05	5.0%	10.0	20.00	19.95	Bank of America
20.00	19.95	Bank of America	20.00	+0.05	5.0%	10.0	30.00	29.95	Bank of America
30.00	29.95	Bank of America	30.00	+0.05	5.0%	10.0	40.00	39.95	Bank of America
40.00	39.95	Bank of America	40.00	+0.05	5.0%	10.0	50.00	49.95	Bank of America
50.00	49.95	Bank of America	50.00	+0.05	5.0%	10.0	60.00	59.95	Bank of America
60.00	59.95	Bank of America	60.00	+0.05	5.0%	10.0	70.00	69.95	Bank of America
70.00	69.95	Bank of America	70.00	+0.05	5.0%	10.0	80.00	79.95	Bank of America
80.00	79.95	Bank of America	80.00	+0.05	5.0%	10.0	90.00	89.95	Bank of America
90.00	89.95	Bank of America	90.00	+0.05	5.0%	10.0	100.00	99.95	Bank of America
100.00	99.95	Bank of America	100.00	+0.05	5.0%	10.0	110.00	109.95	Bank of America
ELECTRONIC & ELECT									
10.00	9.95	Bank of America	10.00	+0.05	5.0%	10.0	20.00	19.95	Bank of America
20.00	19.95	Bank of America	20.00	+0.05	5.0%	10.0	30.00	29.95	Bank of America
30.00	29.95	Bank of America	30.00	+0.05	5.0%	10.0	40.00	39.95	Bank of America
40.00	39.95	Bank of America	40.00	+0.05	5.0%	10.0	50.00	49.95	Bank of America
50.00	49.95	Bank of America	50.00	+0.05	5.0%	10.0	60.00	59.95	Bank of America
60.00	59.95	Bank of America	60.00	+0.05	5.0%	10.0	70.00	69.95	Bank of America
70.00	69.95	Bank of America	70.00	+0.05	5.0%	10.0	80.00	79.95	Bank of America
80.00	79.95	Bank of America	80.00	+0.05	5.0%	10.0	90.00	89.95	Bank of America
90.00	89.95	Bank of America	90.00	+0.05	5.0%	10.0	100.00	99.95	Bank of America
100.00	99.95	Bank of America	100.00	+0.05	5.0%	10.0	110.00	109.95	Bank of America
BUILDING & CONSTRUCT									
10.00	9.95	Bank of America	10.00	+0.05	5.0%	10.0	20.00	19.95	Bank of America
20.00	19.95	Bank of America	20.00	+0.05	5.0%	10.0	30.00	29.95	Bank of America
30.00	29.95	Bank of America	30.00	+0.05	5.0%	10.0	40.00	39.95	Bank of America
40.00	39.95	Bank of America	40.00	+0.05	5.0%	10.0	50.00	49.95	Bank of America
50.00	49.95	Bank of America	50.00	+0.05	5.0%	10.0	60.00	59.95	Bank of America
60.00	59.95	Bank of America	60.00	+0.05	5.0%	10.0	70.00	69.95	Bank of America
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100.00	99.95	Bank of America	100.00	+0.05	5.0%	10.0	110.00	109.95	Bank of America
BUILDING MATERIALS									
10.00	9.95	Bank of America	10.00	+0.05	5.0%	10.0	20.00	19.95	Bank of America
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100.00	99.95	Bank of America	100.00	+0.05	5.0%	10.0	110.00	109.95	Bank of America
ENGINEERING									
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40.00	39.95	Bank of America	40.00	+0.05	5.0%	10.0	50.00	49.95	Bank of America
50.00	49.95	Bank of America	50.00	+0.05	5.0%	10.0	60.00	59.95	Bank of America
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70.00	69.95	Bank of America	70.00	+0.05	5.0%	10.0	80.00	79.95	Bank of America
80.00	79.95	Bank of America	80.00	+0.05	5.0%	10.0	90.00	89.95	Bank of America
90.00	89.95	Bank of America	90.00	+0.05	5.0%	10.0	100.00	99.95	Bank of America
100.00	99.95	Bank of America	100.00	+0.05	5.0%	10.0	110.00	109.95	Bank of America



Harvey Elliott, Air Correspondent, introduces a three-page report on an improved airport that is lifting hopes on the South Coast

# Take off for the runway of the future

As Heathrow and Gatwick airports fill to overflowing, airlines, tour operators, freight companies and business travel arrangers are seeking new, convenient, cheap and efficient runways and terminals in the south of England.

The Government has ruled out the building of a new airport on a greenfield site, so any expansion must come from existing airfields. They must be capable of providing a safe haven for the new generation of long-range jets as well as a good connecting hub for business travellers.

Such an airport is Bournemouth International. Its potential was quickly recognised by the coach company National Express, which last year spent £7.2 million on buying a 999-year lease from two local councils.

The airport currently employs 150 people and generated a £5 million turnover last year. The lease includes almost 1,000 acres of land, some of it already devoted to light

industry — some 2,500 people are employed on the site as a whole. The airport came with a £750,000 air-safety radar system already installed, and with X-ray screening at each of the terminal's three check-in points.

National Express immediately decided to extend the runway from 1.8 km to 2.2 km so that it would accommodate any new jets that might be introduced. That work is now complete.

Some people who live near by are worried that noisy night-time freighters may disturb their peace. The airport says it is doing all it can to minimise noise and pollution. Most local people approve of the airport extension, seeing in it the generation of new jobs for the region.

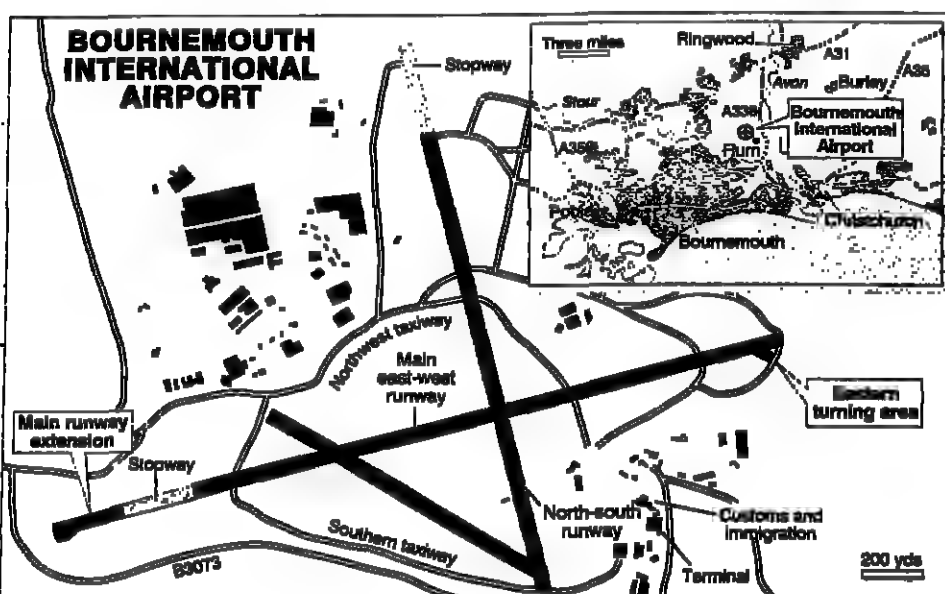
An opinion poll of travel agents showed that 80 per cent of local people would fly from Bournemouth if the destina-

tions were available. Already there is evidence that charter airlines want to move in to Bournemouth and fly holiday-makers from an airport near their homes, rather than ask them to travel to Gatwick, Cardiff or Southampton.

Thomson has decided to upgrade its charter flights to Palma to a Britannia Airways 290-seat Boeing 767-200, instantly adding 3,500 package holidays from Bournemouth to Majorca alone for the summer 1996 programme.

Unijet will use a Boeing 767 in the first non-stop transatlantic flights from the airport when Bath Travel operates tours to Orlando, Florida, on May 30 and October 6. And Air Tours will operate an additional Tenerife series from Bournemouth International for its Golden Years winter programme after the success of recent day trips to Prague and Budapest.

## Churchill even based his official plane there



Peter Bath, the chairman of Bath Travel, welcomes a passenger to Bournemouth International Airport

## Ready and waiting for action

Della Mason on the planes converted for military use



Dassault Falcon 20s at Bournemouth: the Royal Navy and RAF use Falcons for training

A fleet of 20 sleek Dassault Falcon 20s, equipped with the latest in electronic warfare devices, operates from Bournemouth International Airport. The jets, used for Royal Navy and RAF training, are owned by FR Aviation (FRA) which, in 12 years at Bournemouth, has become a world-market leader in the modification of civil aircraft for high-technology special-mission purposes.

Will it succeed in the long term? If, as is becoming increasingly likely, Heathrow's fifth terminal is turned down, and if the predicted growth in air travel takes place, it seems inevitable that it will grow rapidly. The helicopter services or air taxi operations which can fan out from Bournemouth to the major industrial centres will enable businessmen to travel much more quickly than by conventional methods.

Cargo companies are probably more frustrated than anyone at the congestion in the major airports because they need to be able to move fresh produce fast and to distribute it quickly to the main centres of population. Bournemouth International Airport will help them to do that.

FRA also operates a target-towing service in support of weapons systems operated by air, land and maritime forces. This covers visual and radar-aimed guns, and sea-skimming missiles.

The company employs 500 men and women, from engineers to pilots and crew, plus office staff at its Bournemouth headquarters. It trains its own apprentices and, on behalf of the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food, operates a fleet of maritime patrol aircraft, providing surveillance over many of Britain's sea-fishing areas.

The company has had this responsibility since 1982. Spe-

cially equipped Pilatus Britten-Norman turbine Islanders and Dornier 228-200 aircraft were modified for this job. This has enabled the RAF Nimrod aircraft to be withdrawn from fisheries surveillance.

In association with Serco, FRA has a large facilities management side to its business. The company manages two MoD experimental airfields, in Scotland and Wales. It also services and maintains aircraft used by the Queen — now renamed Number 32 Squadron, based at RAF Northolt.

The company is also expanding: it has a joint venture

in France (AvDef), another being formed in Germany and a third in Malaysia.

Richard Rhodes, FRA's marketing director and a former test pilot, says: "The UK has pioneered the path to providing total airborne training to meet the highest requirements. And the rest of the world is looking to us as they, too, are trying to cut their defence costs. We should be able to bring in additional work to our maintenance and conversion workshops, with rather larger aircraft from now on."

"We are keen to do so to provide more high-tech employment in the area."

## STEELE RAYMOND

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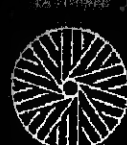
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## WE'RE REALLY TAKING OFF.

A new extended runway to take the latest generation of larger, quieter jets.

More medium and long-haul destinations direct from Bournemouth.

More tour operators planned to offer a wider choice of holidays — including Thomson, Air Tours, Palmair, Phoenix and Islanders.

More facilities for freight being created, to meet the growing demands of local companies.

For more information on the new Bournemouth International Airport ring our Hotline on 01202 593939 Ext. 220.

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## On the buses . . . and the flight paths

National Express, the new owner of Bournemouth International Airport, has emerged as one of the most powerful players in the brave new deregulated world of British public transport.

Sold by the Government to a management buyout team in 1988 for £12 million, it is now valued on the stock market at more than £450 million. At the time of privatisation it was a long-distance domestic coach operator. Eight years later, it has a finger in virtually every public transport pie, while its coach network extends from Killarney to St Petersburg and Aberdeen to the Aegean.

The company now owns two airports — the other is East Midlands, for which it paid £27.1 million in 1993. It also has bus companies in the West Midlands and the North East, a Polish coach company, the Euroline international coach service and a 17 per cent

**Jonathan Prynne, Transport Correspondent, on the building of a successful road, rail and air empire**

share in London & Continental Railways, the consortium that will shortly take over the running of Eurostar trains.

The company had made an aggressive play for some of the juicier franchises emerging from the rail privatisation programme. Thwarted in the first round of franchises, it was named yesterday as the preferred bidder for the Gatwick Express service, regarded as one of the plums of the rail network. National Express has thus seen off the challenge of Richard Branson's Virgin Group as well as a Gatwick Express management-employee buy-out team.

National Express is also the preferred bidder for the Midland Main Line. The Office of Fair Trading is likely to look at the fact that the company runs coach services to destina-

tions served on the line, which runs from St Pancras station, London to Leeds via Leicester, Nottingham, Derby and Sheffield. Adam Mills, the deputy chief executive of National Express, says that as a concession to the OFT he has

**'Two airports form the final division of the company'**

pledged to maintain all coach and train services and not to raise fares.

The company's plans for Gatwick Express include more regular night-time services, a check-in for passen-

gers with hand luggage only, and new trains to replace the ageing former InterCity rolling stock on the route.

However, its first involvement with rail travel will come not through the domestic train franchises but through its participation in London & Continental, which is expected to take over running Eurostar on April 1. National Express's role in the consortium is to overhaul the much-criticised ticket distribution arrangements.

National Express operates the British and Dutch partners in the Eurotunnel long-distance coach consortium. With its traditional destinations of Brussels and Paris under attack from Eurostar, Eurotunnel is opening up to cities in the South of France, Italy and Central and Eastern Europe.

However, it is the less glamorous end of the bus market, its local domestic services, that is taking National Express into the transport big league. It paid £224 million for West Midlands Travel (WMT) last year, and the new subsidiary contributed £24.7 million of operating profits during the last financial year. With its other East, National Express is the UK's fourth biggest bus operator.

The final division of the company is formed by its two airports. Mr Mills, a former City adviser to management buyout teams, foresees strong growth for all parts of National Express's rapidly expanding transport empire.

As the Government's programme of transport deregulation and privatisation unfolds and disillusionment with the private motor car grows in line with traffic congestion, it would appear that National Express has timed its diversification well.



Well-timed diversification: Adam Mills, deputy chief executive of National Express

### PILOT TRAINING

Sir Alan Cobham, founder of Bournemouth International Airport, used to run a "flying circus", piloting his own bi-plane and looping the loop in mini air displays over Bournemouth. Della Mason writes.

The pilots trained these days at the town's European College of Aviation may not be allowed to indulge themselves in quite so flamboyant a fashion, but they are no less enthusiastic about flying. To achieve their goal they will remortgage their houses, take out large bank loans and give up apparently lucrative and safe careers.

There is, of course, another motive. Commercial pilots can command £50,000 a year — and as the economy improves, there are jobs to be had.

The college's partners, SFT Aviation and the Professional Pilot Study Centre (PPSC) have, respectively, trained more than 3,000 commercial pilots and tutored some 10,000 commercial pilot students.

The commercial pilot training course begins four times a year, with a class of up to 16 students aged 18 and upwards from all over the world. This year they are each paying



At the simulator: Nick Pittaway, aged 22, took out a 25-year loan for his pilot training

£37,400 plus VAT, less the NVQ grant which enables students to claim back 24 per cent or 40 per cent, according to their tax status.

"When prospective pilots come to us, we hold a one-day assessment," says Colin Green, the college's director. "For those who need it, we also offer financial guidance."

Once a prospective pilot has been accepted, it is heads down. Three months of intensive training at ground school are followed by three equally intensive months of flying in

Florida. Then it's back to Britain for seven months of combined ground school and flying, plus examinations and flight tests.

Today, former graduates fly for British Airways, Virgin Atlantic and many other international airlines.

The college's tutors include former RAF instructors, Civil Aviation Authority flight examiners and commercial pilots. PPSC prepares students for the written examinations and supplies correspondence courses.

The Red Arrows have a close connection with Professional Air Training, a pilot flight training school run by Anthony Mollison. Adrian Thurley, for example, was flight leader of the Arrows for three years before training for his Instrument Rating examinations at the school, which has been on the airport for eight years. Approved by the CAA to run courses for the Basic Commercial Pilots Licence, the school also trains businessmen to fly their own executive planes.

### THE SPEED MERCHANTS



Flashback: Norris, left, Noble and Ackroyd in 1982

In 1983 the jet-engined supercar Thrust II, driven by Richard Noble, rocketed to 633.46 mph in the Nevada desert. It was a new world land speed record — a success conceived and engineered at Bournemouth, Della Mason writes.

Richard Noble trained as a pilot at Bournemouth Flying Club, and it was there that the Thrust II team finalised their plans with John Ackroyd, the car's designer, the engineers, sponsors and driver. The car was given a trial run and static tests at the airport.

Today the man who headed that team, Ken Norris, runs a family business with his wife Marjorie and sons William and John on the airport site. Anglo American Airmotive

services aeroplane engines and acts as sole UK distributor of the new Piper, an American business aircraft. It is also the UK's main supplier

of Piper parts and main servicing and warranty centre.

Mr Norris's office is filled with mementos of land and

water speed records, from paintings to model cars. As an aircraft designer and aeronautical engineer interested in the dynamics of speed and thrust, he was introduced to speed pioneer Donald Campbell in the 1950s through his brother Lewis, a marine engineer, and began working with him as a designer.

Campbell was killed on Lake Coniston in January, 1967, after topping 300 mph in an attempt on the world water speed record. "It was a tragedy," says Mr Norris. "I liked and respected Donald enormously."

Today Mr Norris's family business also owns A&G Aviation Ltd, which runs the Bournemouth Flying Club as a proprietary club.

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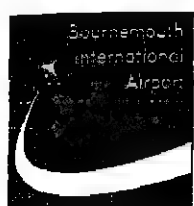
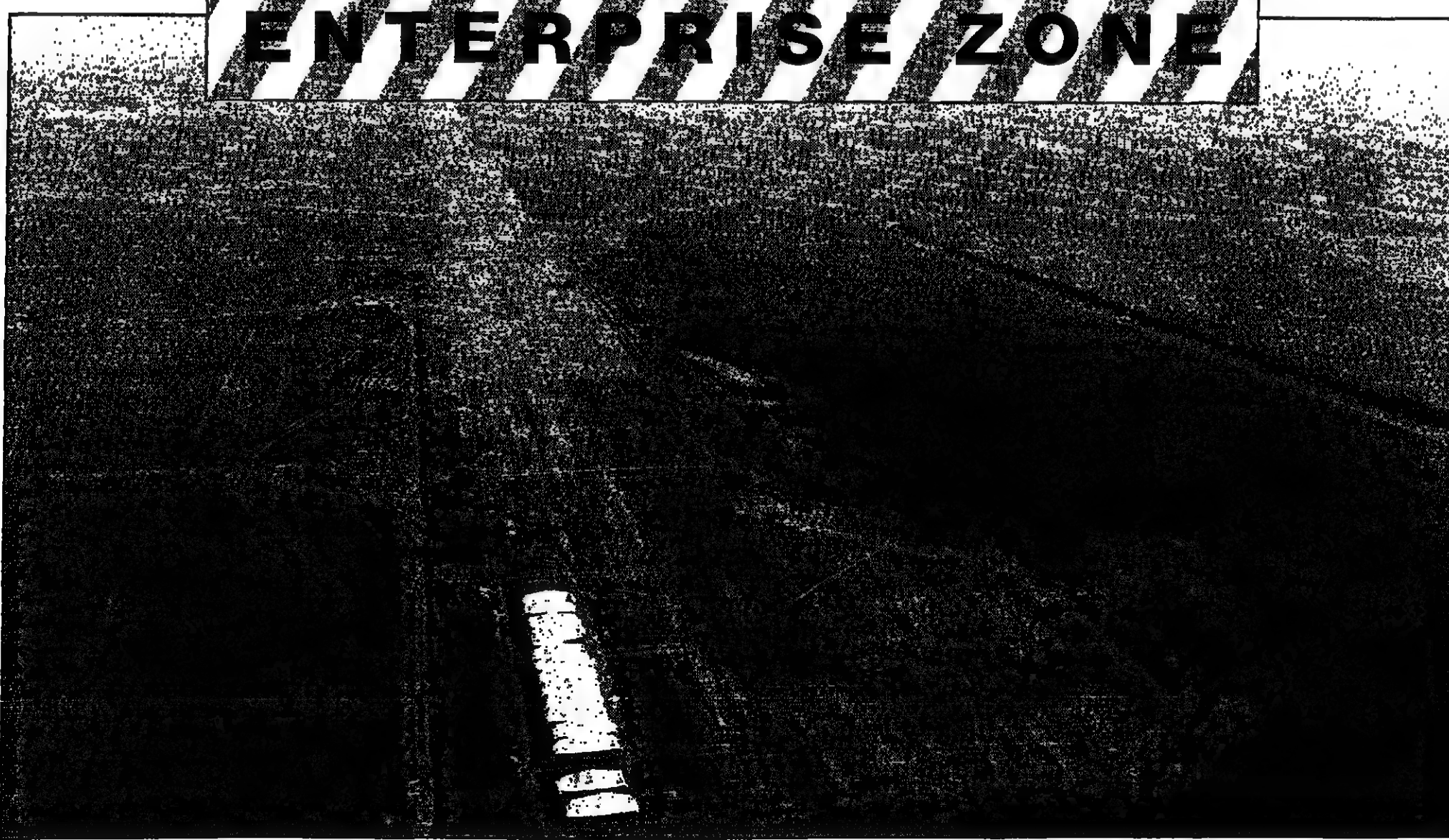
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# Keeping the noise down

Della Mason reports on the efforts of the airport management to allay residents' fears

A longer runway allows a speedier, quieter ascent and modern planes make less noise than their forebears. That is what the experts say, but the fears of residents living under Bournemouth's flight path have yet to be completely allayed.

Douglas Wilson, the managing director, and his team have been explaining aeronautical and engineering facts at meetings with local people. The residents of Burley, a village in a conservation area six miles northeast of the airport, are in the flight path of the extended runway. Houses there can fetch £1 million.

Mr Wilson says: "I have listened to everyone and we have monitored noise. We are looking at a proposal to take aircraft up to 2,000ft rather than 1,500ft."

Ron Orton, who represents Burley on the New Forest District Council, has been at each of these meetings as a vital part of the Burley Action Committee. "The ball," he says, "is in the airport's court and it and the Civil Aviation Authority are looking at other proposals. We hope for a change in the flight path so that it does not come directly over Burley. We have asked that planes do not overfly the village except when absolutely necessary."

Russell Lucas, chairman of Hurn Parish Council, says that local people are particularly worried about night flights. "In the daytime, the residents do not mind," he says. "But if there is any increase in night flying, noisy night-time engine testing or using aeroplanes with outdated engines, we shall protest."

He adds that residents approve of the "whispering jet" used by Bath Travel, the tourist firm. The parish council has a council member on the Airport Consultative Com-

mittee monitoring events. Mr Lucas says: "We will not be walked over regarding noise levels."

Between a quarter and a third of the airport's 950 acres of heathland are sites of special scientific interest. The airport company is trying to ensure that rare species are protected — these include the Dartford warbler, the nightjar, the sand lizard and the smooth snake, and, on the nearby Moors River, dragonflies and butterflies. The unusual heath grasshopper is also found. One runway is being shortened to protect these species.

The areas encompassed by Bournemouth airport are described as wildlife habitats of international importance. This is because so many heathlands, not only in Britain but also in northwest Europe, have been lost.

Karl Cradick is associate director of Terence O'Rourke, the Bournemouth consultants who prepared the airport's planning application, approved in December 1993. "The application was accompanied by a full environmental statement," he says. "This considered the effects of the runway works comprehensively in consultation with a wide range of public, private and voluntary interests."

"Aircraft noise was a prime area of interest. However, by using quieter aircraft and the adoption of noise-minimisation techniques on take-off, we are confident that the improved runway will make the airport quieter in future than it has been in the past."

Bournemouth, with about 102,000 ATMs (air traffic movements) a year, has always been one of Britain's busiest airports. Seventy-two per cent of ATMs are flight training, 11 per cent regular charter-flight services and the rest passenger aircraft.



Target for complaints: Douglas Wilson, the airport manager, has been holding meetings with local residents

## Vampires and Gnats on the wing



Restoration project: Eric Hayward stands in front of a Hawker Hunter aircraft at the Jet Heritage Collection

Hawker Hunters, Meteors, Vampires and Gnats are among the aircraft from the late 1940s and 1950s that will be part of the Air Flying Museum to be opened next year by the Jet Heritage Charitable Trust at Bournemouth International Airport, Della Mason writes.

The enthusiast behind the venture is Eric Hayward, whose career in engineering perfectly qualifies him to transform the shell of a jet into a working flying machine. These planes are his life. "I was at Hawker's building Hunters, Gnats, Harriers and Hawks for 27 years," he says.

This skill has earned Mr Hayward a host of loyal supporters, enthusiasts and owners, who will spend up to £100,000 to get one of these planes flying again.

Among those who share his enthusiasm for jet planes is King Hussein of Jordan, who trained at RAF Cranwell, flew with the RAF and then set up the Royal Jordanian Air Force in his homeland. He commissioned Jet Heritage to find and restore some of each of the jet planes that served in the Jordanian force. The finished aircraft will end up in a museum in Amman. "King Hussein has also agreed to become the royal patron of our Jet Heritage Museum here in Bournemouth," Mr Hayward says. "He flies in occasionally to see the planes. It's always very pleasant..."

and quite informal. We enjoy talking about planes."

In a letter to Mr Hayward, King Hussein wrote: "I have been most impressed by all I saw... There are in our world a few who care, as do one's friends, for what is a part of aviation history and a beautiful part of it."

There are, however, some missing parts of aviation history. Mr Hayward is particularly eager to find an early jet, the Supermarine Attacker, built at Southampton and used by the Navy.

Lying in his main hangar workshop is the cigar-shaped body of a Supermarine Swift jet fighter, one of only four left in the world. Mr Hayward would like to work on this aircraft for the museum, but a busy schedule for private clients, from Germany and elsewhere, has meant that business has to take precedence. He is now seeking a sponsor to help this project along.

Mr Hayward hopes the museum will enhance the reputation of Sir Frank Whittle, the British inventor. "We should remember that it was an Englishman who invented the jet engine. It changed the shape of aviation for ever and we should be proud of it."

Jet Heritage Charitable Trust: 01202 581076.



## A resort for the well-travelled

### LOCAL INDUSTRIES

Bournemouth Tourism sees the opening of the new large airport runway as good news for holiday-makers, and for the 50,000 foreign students from the Continent and the Far East who visit the town all year round to learn English at the local language schools, Della Mason writes.

A spokesman for Bournemouth Tourism said its aim is to explode the myth that Bournemouth is a place mainly for the elderly. Hotels are now promoting special rates for "family rooms" and last year a five-week Kids Festival was launched.

"This is a university town for young people," the spokesman added. "It has changed very dramatically. We feel the airport will help this influx of travel and trade."

The expanded runway will be a boon, too, for Bournemouth International Centre, one of the largest conference centres in the country.

On the airport site there are dozens of small and medium-sized companies, all aircraft-related and all eager to expand. The site is brimming with high-tech engineering and servicing facilities, charter lines, private airline fleets, training warplanes, executive jets, air display fleets and companies which fit out the interiors of planes.

An airport may not seem the most likely venue for a board meeting, but Source Aviation, led by Don Wood, operates a fleet of BAe 125 eight-seater jets which caters for board members. Business people can hire an executive jet and fly in colleagues for a meeting, saving time and the cost of a hotel. The business is proving to be highly popular.

Source Aviation also runs the world's largest privately owned jet formation display team. Its fleet of nine vintage De Havilland Venoms and Vampires are flown by test pilots from the RAF and the

Red Arrows. The fleet performs at airshows such as Biggin Hill, and at RAF open days. It is presently negotiating a display at the Monaco Grand Prix. The planes are all serviced at its Bournemouth engineering facility.

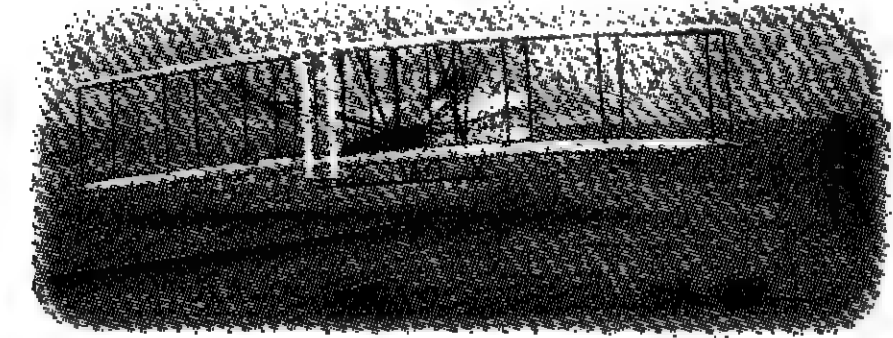
The Red Arrows themselves are never far away from Bournemouth. The team uses the airport's centres to augment its RAF training as it steps into the world of commercial airlines. The summer "across the beach" display always delights tourists.

Orchestras, pop stars and football teams are catered for by European Aviation Air Charter's fleet of 22 BAC 1-11s. Manchester United, Eric Clapton and the trade mission to Saudi Arabia with Michael Heseltine, the Deputy Prime Minister, have all been recent clients.

The 1-11s — 104-seaters, originally built at Bournemouth by the British Aircraft Corporation — are now home again. They are maintained at Bournemouth and leased to other operators for holiday charters.

IDS Aircraft (named after Ian Sutherland, the owner) is one of Britain's two main authorised service centres for the Cessna Citation aircraft. The firm has been in business for about 20 years, first at Heathrow and now in Bournemouth. These small executive jets are highly popular in Europe: there are 2,000 in operation across the globe. IDS's centre, one of seven in Europe, concentrates on servicing and warranties.

Normanair-Garrett, part of the Westland Group and now owned by GKN, has a workforce of 120 people at Bournemouth. It manufactures environmental control and life-support systems for the aircraft industry — the controls that allow planes to fly, pressurised, at high altitude.



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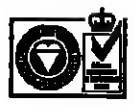
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## ■ OPERA 1

The Royal Opera has ended up with an *Arabella* cast of formidable strength, despite a hiccup or two



## ■ OPERA 2

The National Youth Music Theatre's new *Threepenny Opera* is high on musical values, but low on laughs

THE TIMES  
ARTS

## ■ CONCERT

At the Albert Hall, Bryn Terfel steps in to help to save the RPO's performance of *La Damnation de Faust*



## ■ DANCE

Scottish Ballet proves the wisdom of its decision to hire Mark Baldwin as its resident choreographer

MUSIC AND OPERA: A dream cast shines at the Garden; Brecht without focus; Terfel wins a devilish triumph

## Cheryl blossom time

Arabella  
Covent Garden

It's well that ends well: after one or two hiccups the Royal Opera has ended up with an *Arabella* cast of formidable strength — at least in the upper reaches. It was hard to believe that Cheryl Studer was singing the title role for the first time on Wednesday, so relaxed and confident did she appear. Her voice is, of course, perfect for it, sweetly silvery in the upper reaches, but with a warm, coppery colour showing through in the middle register, like the best Sheffield plate.

But it was the wealth of insight she brought to her delivery of Hofmannsthal's words that suggested she had been singing the role for years: that, and extremely clever husbanding of breath in the long, ecstatic lines. She let fly only sparingly — and hence to grand effect in the first and third finales — and may risk more as she grows into the part: this was an astounding first attempt, and it can only get better and better.

She was fortunate to have so experienced a partner as Wolfgang Brendel. His juicy *Heldenbariton*, expanding excitingly the higher it goes, is — again — perfect for Mandryka, and he presented a veritable volcano of a man: big-hearted, volatile, slightly mad around the eyes. The way he supported Studer as she negotiated that treacherous second verse of the folksong love duet, right at the top of the scale, was the mark of a true colleague.

The third jewel in the cast was Christiane Oelze as Zdenka. The hypercritical might ask for more weight of tone, but her singing was sweet and true, and her body-language simply heart-rending. Zdenka is, of course, the most interesting character in the opera, and Oelze knows and is worthy of it. Anne Howell's dizzy Adelaide, all fluttering hands and darting eyes, is a miracle of wit; she and Gillian Knight's purr-purred-Fortune Teller get the opera off to the best possible start. Lillian Watson, celebrating 25 years at Covent Garden,



Perfect partners: Wolfgang Brendel as Mandryka and Cheryl Studer in the title role of *Arabella* at the Royal Opera House

sounded barely that age as the Flakermilli. There is some miscasting and undercasting lower down. Herbert Lippert's Mozart-scale Matteo does not quite work in a house this size, and the three Counts are light on dramatic and vocal presence. Some crudities have crept into the 30-year-old production, including a Mills & Boon light-

ing effect for the love duet and a supernumerary, busily eavesdropping on the intensely private finale. Gentlemen conversing with hands in their pockets, or sitting down while ladies stand — I know these things are not important any more, but if you are going to do *Arabella* as a comedy of period manners, then you may as well try to get them right.

Mark Elder certainly gets Strauss's score right in the pit: he appears to be flowing along with the music's natural shape, but is of course controlling that flow with quiet determination. It is very clever to suggest the former while effecting the latter. The orchestra played well.

RODNEY MILNES

## Mack's blunt knife

The *Threepenny Opera*  
Lyric, Hammersmith

Laurence Taylor managed Machethe's tricky numbers with enviable aplomb. In the context of such musical expertise, it was odd that Berry sanctioned turning Peachum's little song in Act III into a chorus number — a big mistake.

It made one a little shy to read in the programme that Mark Patenden's production, which opened at last year's Edinburgh Festival, had meanwhile been taken to New York thanks to the (misdirected?) generosity of NYMT's patron, Andrew Lloyd Webber. It is a curiously unfocused staging in which the expert

musical guidance has by no means been matched in other departments: the actors have not been shown how to deliver Brecht's lines and get laughs; — and without laughs *The Threepenny Opera* can seem awfully dull and long.

There are elaborate sets that take ages to change, requiring orchestral reprises to cover stage activity — heaven knows what Brecht would have said. The Otto Dix monochrome lady, sings *Mack the Knife* and presides over the action, but the beggars' placards have been updated; yet the director steps back from underlining the way these interwar works are becoming less and less period pieces (compare Sam Mendes's scintillating version at the Donmar).

The Peachums and the Browns are quite rightly nice, middle-class business people, but who is Machethe? The focus desperately needs tightening, and an eyebrow or two must have been raised on Broadway, doing the young company few favours. Natural talent, of course, shines through. I enjoyed Kevin Pampin's naively eager Fitch, and James Capewell's daffy, Brummie Jake.

## The better Devil you know

ANYONE frustrated by Bryn Terfel's non-appearance in the Royal Opera's *Arabella* will be doubly frustrated to have missed his unscheduled appearance at the Albert Hall, replacing Samuel Ramey as Mephistopheles in the Royal Philharmonic's *La Damnation de Faust*.

He was but one of four major substitutes in Tuesday's line-up. On top of the conductor Valery Gergiev's cancellation because of illness, the orchestra had to contend with the withdrawal of all three principal soloists, and it is astonishing that the concert went ahead so well.

It helped to have Philippe Auguin on the podium. He conducted with a cool authority that did not preclude passion. The orchestral set

Damnation of Faust  
Albert Hall

pieces went with idiomatic brio and, some dubious trombone interpolations apart, early lapses of ensemble were soon forgotten as the performance gained pace.

Berlioz's Goethe-inspired *legende dramatique* is a brilliant sequence of musical sketches, not an opera as some have tried to prove. Auguin's strength was his attention to vivid detail, and he left it to each listener to invent his or her own narrative.

Although the RPO was unable to supply any French singers, all sang in good French, none better than David Rendall as Faust. His

plangent tenor tone and caressing way with Berlioz's lines were a rare pleasure.

Terfel was singing his first Berlioz Mephistopheles, but after a run as Nick Shadow in *The Rake's Progress*, he was well inside the diabolical character. He scaled down his voice to smooth-tongued effect in the early scenes and developed a more menacing presence as the evening went on.

Ann Murray was an affecting Marguerite, but Jeremy White was unable to make much of Brander. The alert ladies of the Royal Choral Society and Brighton Festival Chorus outshone the men, who, as tavern drinkers, appeared to be on nothing stronger than Diet Fanta.

JOHN ALLISON

## Kiss the girls and make them fly

Since launching himself on the independent circuit in 1992, the former dancer Mark Baldwin has made great strides as a choreographer. His work for his own company has become increasingly more assured, versatile and musically ambitious. Audiences naturally gravitate towards his sly humour and easy technical fluency. And despite the fact that he spent ten years as a dancer with Rambert Dance Company, Baldwin's background is sufficiently diverse — from classical ballet to Cunningham — to ensure that he has a wide movement vocabulary at his disposal.

Last year the Scottish Ballet snapped him up as their resident choreographer. If *Ae Fond Kiss* (the first result of that new relationship) is any indication, it was a clever move on the part of Scottish Ballet's director, Galina Samsova.

Baldwin uses the Divertissement from Stravinsky's *Le Baiser de la Fée* for his 25-minute curtain-raiser to the company's production of *La Sylphide*. Like *Sylphide*, *Ae Fond Kiss* is one for the girls. They tease, charm and tantalise, and the men lick at their heels like adoring puppies.



*Ae Fond Kiss*, featuring Nicci Theis and Rupert Jowett

## DANCE

Scottish Ballet  
Festival Theatre,  
Edinburgh

Baldwin has a playful nature as a dancer. Although he demands precision, orchestrating his 14 dancers in tidy regimentation, he clearly expects them to have a good time. Their jumps are choreographed to take off enthusiasts

tically, their partnering is gently seductive and a kind of innocence with attitude permeates their stylistic personas. Maybe that's what went wrong at the Edinburgh Festival Theatre last week. The matinee cast I saw was led by the glum duo of Daria Klimentova and Vladislav Bubnov; Baldwin kept giving them opportunities to inject individual colour and personality into his choreography, and they kept ignoring them. One could just imagine what a livelier couple would do with *Ae Fond Kiss*.

Scottish Ballet's *La Sylphide* is a real treat. The Bournonville classic is an absolute charmer, especially in Hens Brenna's immaculate production, restaged this year by Sorella Englund. Peter Cazalet's restful designs set a most attractive scene for the feast of robust romantic dancing that the Scottish dancers serve up. The company looks well rehearsed in the Bournonville style — jumps are beautifully cushioned, phrasing skirts delightfully across Lovenskjold's score — and the story is told through the clearest of mime.

Maria Teresa Del Real led a fine cast on Saturday. The extraordinary softness of her dancing in the title role added a richness to choreography that is often underplayed in the misguided pursuit of historical authenticity. She bent Campbell McKenzie's amenable James to her will with such allure that who could blame his ill-fated transgression with a sylph? Robin Bernadet produced some lovely dancing as Gurn, the lucky man who wins Effie's heart by default, while Robert Hampton's malevolent Madge took hold of the action with a magnetic authority.

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VENUE: Tonight at the Tron, Glasgow

## THE TIMES ARTS

## CHOICE 3

**Opening night for Nick Dear's adaptation of A Family Affair**

VENUE: Tonight at Theatr Chyd, Mold

## THEATRE

**Nigel Williams's new play at the Royal Court, Harry and Me, makes for a thoroughly irritating evening**

Benedict Nightingale finds little to applaud in Nigel Williams's new farce

## Hanging on the phone

## Harry and Me Royal Court

If someone were to cut off the phones that clutter the big, messy office where Nigel Williams's new farce is set, the piece would hardly exist at all. The characters speak on mobiles and on plugged-in contraptions, at times two or three simultaneously. They use the airwaves to ingratiate, implore, pester, clog up other people's phone systems, threaten, curse, scream and do a series of funny voices. All that is lacking to make an irritating evening complete is a guest appearance by Bob Hoskins, assuring us with a jolly cockney wink that it's good to talk.

James Macdonald's cast is a strong one. Ron Cook, doing a frighteningly plausible imitation of a rabid weasel, plays the manic producer of what is not very originally known as "the television chat show from hell". Sheila Hancock, his PA, is a dyed blonde of uncertain age who copes with aspiring interviewees in a dim nasal drone: "Your skin affliction does sound a fascinating one - I'll be in touch." Dudley Sutton plays the programme's host, Harry Harrod, every sagging inch proclaiming that he and his career are stuck somewhere between the dumps and the doldrums.

The first half mainly consists of Cook's demented efforts to solve the double crisis caused when Harrod goes on an alcoholic binge and



Crossed lines: Ron Cook, Dudley Sutton, Sheila Hancock make up a good cast but are ill-served by their material

a rock star is prevented by his agent from appearing on *The Harrod Show*. I sniggered at the four-letter words came pouring out of his mouth, but I did not snigger long enough to stem the objections accumulating in my mind. Don't the trades get a bit repetitive and predictable? Why the desperation to nab a singer who, it emerges, has never been a chart-topper in Finland or Zambia. Let alone Britain or America? And why is Sutton's Harrod so unaffected by il-

lusion when he finally arrives? None of these questions is adequately answered in a second half that consists of more of the same, only more frantic, more obsessive. Before long the characters are besieging the agent's office with phone calls they pretend come from Chicago, LA, Newcastle, heaven knows where. But their deceit is neither as logical nor as beguiling as good farce demands, and, still more unfortunately, there are signs that Williams wishes to deep-

en the increasingly lunatic proceedings. Harrod turns out to have a long-lost son who is dying from an AIDS-related disease. Hancock's Tracy learns she has secondary cancer, and even Ray launches into a lament for his own meaninglessness.

If the aim is to suggest a pain and poignancy in these empty, driven lives, it is about as effective as painting sad faces on a bunch of party balloons. It is best to overlook such intrusions and concen-

trate on what fun there is. This mainly comes from Hancock's attempts to pass herself off as an Irish singer, a Welsh soothsayer, a Russian shrink, an upper-class solicitor, a tax official from the North East, assorted Americans and the head of the Dutch Guild of Film Agents "from Ormskirk". It may not be clear why she assays all these accents or how so lowly a factotum can be so vocally versatile; but at least she makes you laugh.

## LONDON

**MAGNIFICENT VIENNA:** Pierre Boulez conducts one of the great orchestras of the world, the Vienna Philharmonic, for a programme of Haydn's Symphony No 104, London, and Mahler's Symphony No 5. Festival Hall, South Bank, SE1 (0171-901 4242). Sun, 7.30pm. £

**RUSSIAN NIGHTS:** Conductors Ilya Musin and Stan Edwards step in for Valery Gergiev in the weekend's Royal Philharmonic Orchestra concert. Works for these programmes in the Marylebone series will be by Tchaikovsky, Prokofiev, Shostakovich, Stravinsky. Barbican, St. John's, EC2 (0171-558 8881). Tonight and Sat, 7.30pm. £

## ELSEWHERE

**CHESTER:** It's a weekend of previews for *Strangers on a Train*. Craig Warner's stage version of the

## WEEKEND CHOICE

A daily guide to arts and entertainment compiled by Kris Anderson

## LONDON GALLERIES

**Courtyard:** Drawings by Thomas Gainsborough (0171-473 2528). **Hayward:** Spontaneous Art and Film (0171-908 3144). **National Gallery:** Picasso's Portrait of Angel Fernandez de Soto (0171-747 2881). **National Portrait Gallery:** The Room in View (0171-306 0055). **Royal Academy:** Gustav Caillebotte (0171-439 7433). **Tate:** Cézanne (0171-887 8000). **V&A:** Leighton Frescoes (098 8500).

## THEATRE GUIDE

**Jeremy Kingston's** assessment of theatre showing in London

House full, returns only

Seeds at all prices

(0171-238 2232) Tonight, 7.15pm, Sat, 8pm and 7.15pm. In res.

**MESS JULIE:** Opening night for Polly Teale, directing Susan Lynch and John Hannah in Strindberg's tale of erotic passion and doom. Young Vic, The C&S, SE1 (0171-238 6933). Tonight, 7.30pm. Then Mon-Sat, 7.30pm, mat Sat 3.30pm. £

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**TAP DOGS:** Dean Perry's sextet of dancers in working-boots returns to its building-site set. High energy stuff. Lyric, Shaftesbury Avenue, W1 (0171-434 5045). Mon-Thu, 8pm. Fri and Sat, 6pm and 8.45pm.

**TOMMY:** Hugely impressive staging of the traumatised child's apophysis to a serial killer. London Theatre, Shaftesbury Avenue, W1 (0171-379 5599). Mon-Sat, 8pm; mat Sat 3.30pm. £

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## LONDON

**MAGNIFICENT VIENNA:** Pierre Boulez conducts one of the great orchestras of the world, the Vienna Philharmonic, for a programme of Haydn's Symphony No 104, London, and Mahler's Symphony No 5. Festival Hall, South Bank, SE1 (0171-901 4242). Sun, 7.30pm. £

**RUSSIAN NIGHTS:** Conductors Ilya Musin and Stan Edwards step in for Valery Gergiev in the weekend's Royal Philharmonic Orchestra concert. Works for these programmes in the Marylebone series will be by Tchaikovsky, Prokofiev, Shostakovich, Stravinsky. Barbican, St. John's, EC2 (0171-558 8881). Tonight and Sat, 7.30pm. £

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**POP 1**  
Los Lobos return with an eclectic sound that's set to baffle the ears of those who loved *La Bamba*



**POP 2**  
A change of pace for Tasmin Archer with her latest album, *Bloom*, an impressively cool piece of work

# THE TIMES ARTS



**POP 3**  
Is Tina Turner finally losing her audience? Her new album, *Wildest Dreams*, would suggest she has



**POP 4**  
Singing the praises of American Music Club's Mark Eitzel: the man who turns his friends into heart-rending songs

## Tex-Mex with everything

### NEW ALBUMS

**LOS LOBOS**  
*Colossal Head*  
(Warner Bros 9362-46172)  
ALTHOUGH Los Lobos are best remembered for *La Bamba*, their No 1 hit of nine years ago, that song was never especially representative of their Latino-blues sound. But *Colossal Head* takes them into another dimension altogether. Throwing stylistic caution to the winds, the band from East Los Angeles have come up with an adventurous mixture of progressive rock, acid jazz, Tex-Mex and scraggy blues that recalls, in tiny snatches, an unlikely spectrum of acts — Santana, Evan Lurie, Beck, Morphine, Jethro Tull, Frank Zappa, Tom Waits, the Beastie Boys — without actually sounding like any of them.

The production, by Mitchell Froom and Tchad Blake, is often eerie and echoing, with drum sounds that tend to ricochet like a spanner on steel piping, or else sound like muffled gunshots in the distance. The mood is similarly ill-defined. One minute you find them motorizing to the end of *Mas Y Mas* with a magisterial electric guitar solo. Next thing, they shuffle away with *Everybody Loves a Train*, a ramshackle acoustic guitar groove spiced with baritone sax and a vocal that sounds like the mumbling of an old hobo out riding the rails.

Both these tracks, and others, sound sensational in their own way, but it is a collection whose centre of gravity is difficult to locate, and one that will quickly try the patience of radio programmers and the band's own marketing people. For those prepared to invest the time and interest, however, it is well worth making the effort to seek out this uniquely wonderful album.

**TASMIN ARCHER**  
*Bloom*  
(EMI 7243 8 36178)  
IT WAS only three years ago, but does anyone remember all the fuss that was made about Tasmin Archer when *Sleeping*



Los Lobos throw essence of Santana, Morphine, Jethro Tull and Frank Zappa into the pot and come up with *Colossal Head*

*Satellite* topped the chart and she won her Best Newcomer award at the Brits? So much seems to have happened since then, and she is unlikely to have such a clear run with her second album, *Bloom*, despite its evocative tunes and low-key charm.

Archer remains something of a rarity, a black British singer who sounds more like Chrissie Hynde than Gabrielle, and a writer who manages to keep her songs short and simple, while infusing them with deep shades of longing and regret. With bassist Bruce Thomas and drummer Pete Thomas of the Attractions providing a typically crisp rhythmic foundation, the ubiquitous production team of Mitchell Froom and Tchad Blake stamp the album with their trademark haunted-house ambience, imparting a particularly sparse, spectral feel to the arrangements of *Give in With Grace* and *You Made a Fool of Me*.

**TINA TURNER**  
*Wildest Dreams*  
(Parlophone 7243 8 37684)  
STILL a great singer and a glamorous hooper, Tina Turner knows a trick or two about putting across a song. Unfortunately, that has not been enough to save her from turning into the new Shirley

Bassey. It is not just her brassy rendition of the theme for the James Bond movie, *GoldenEye*, that gives the game away on *Wildest Dreams*. Hobbled by a musclebound production (mostly by Trevor Horn), she tackles a succession of dreary, middle-of-the-road rock tunes such as Tony Joe White's *On*

*Silent Wings* (with guest vocals by Sting) and blustery set-piece ballads with sturdy conviction. But she is playing to the same old gallery, while the rest of the world moves on below.

DAVID SINCLAIR

Mark Eitzel's got something. Caitlin Moran, for a start

## Godlike genius, or what?

It's an almost empty house — just two beds and a card table. An echo-haunted home since his lover left. Down the road there's his local bar. He's their resident "half-famous" person; he gets free drinks in exchange for being pointed out to tourists.

His friends drink here — Kathleen, to whom he wrote an elegiac symphony which "pissed her off" because he didn't think to make up a pseudonym for her. In the corner is another friend, a millionaire who buys marijuana and gives it to AIDS sufferers. "I pay for her parking and beer," Mark Eitzel says. "She never has change."

San Francisco's endless twilight and haunted, dark corners inform every word or note Eitzel has ever sung; his friends become songs, their deaths become songs (Aids has hit hard).

Everclear, Eitzel's fifth album with his band, American Music Club, documented that slow deterioration with painful honesty and an arc-light genius (not a word to be used lightly). *Rolling Stone* magazine made it Album of the Year. Things became strange after he got that award. The previous four albums had been greeted with critical hyperbole and sold around six copies each. After *Rolling Stone* stepped in, American Music Club got a major-label deal, and Kurt Cobain became his biggest fan. Cobain's manager now manages Eitzel.

"Apparently Kurt and Courtney [Love] really liked the album," Eitzel shrugs. "We got signed to Virgin. But the other members of the band became like dazed cows when we got the money. They were like 'Mark, write pop. Write pop songs. We're gonna be the next R.E.M.' And I'm not the next R.E.M. Nowhere near. I write these little songs."

Little songs like *Ex-Girl-Friend*, which starts off in the middle of a nervous breakdown, all wildly writhing guitars and Eitzel's racked howling. He was crying as the song finished — it was too raw, too much of the moment when all reason caves in and all we're left with is grief to cling to. Little songs like *The Hopes and Dreams of Heaven's 10,000 Whores*, where Eitzel's voice buckles as he sings: "Just waiting for my prescription to come, because every second dissolves more of me."

Eitzel's artistic stomping ground is the area razed and cleared by Nick Drake — the song that hangs suspended in an other-worldly bubble of its own, subject to its own storms and seasons. That he is one of the top five songwriters of the 20th century is something only waiting for some kind of celestial poll to confirm.

Of course, Eitzel doesn't see it like that. He is the biggest Mark Eitzel critic and cynic around. His publishing company is called *I Failed in Life Music*. He broke up the reverent atmosphere of American Music Club's London Forum gig by putting a *My Little Pony* down his pants. ("It seemed like a good idea at the time," Eitzel moans, head in hands.) He wants the Hair Club For Men to sponsor his next tour.

"They're fantastic," he enthuses, his soft, brown-eyed face broken up by a grin. "They put these metal poppers in your head, and you clip the hair on. You can cycle, run, swim and dance in complete hair-security."

So you'd actually have metal poppers implanted in your head? "Are you kidding?" Eitzel yelps. "You have to understand that to have hair when he has none, a man would do anything. He would paint a shed with his tongue if necessary."

It's Eitzel's black humour that makes his songs ache with a poignancy that some lantern-jawed rock-god in shades could never aspire to. While artifice is all well and good, it's when songwriters give themselves, as they have nothing else to give, that the white-hot fire of genius burns itself onto records, and puts a wobble into the orbit of stars.

There have been a lot of comets puncturing the sky recently. There is a new Mark Eitzel album on its way. It's a simple equation.

● The album 60 Watt Silver Lining is released on Monday by Virgin Records

### TOP TEN DANCE ALBUMS

- 1 The Coming.....Busta Rhymes (Elektra)
- 2 Second Toughest...Underworld (Junior Boy's Own)
- 3 The Score.....Fugees (Columbia)
- 4 100% Pure Grooves.....Various Artists (Telstar)
- 5 Dance Wars.....Various Artists (J.D.)
- 6 Sessions Six.....Various Artists (Ministry of Soul)
- 7 Eighties Soul Westender.....Various Artists (Dino)
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John O'Leary says the Key Stage 3 papers are now more focused and will be marked with greater consistency

# Final phase in the cycle of testing

National tests at 14 are still associated with the longest-running bout of industrial action to hit schools in the 1990s. But, despite considerable concern about the marking of last year's English papers, the exercise has now been accepted in state schools.

The intention is to offer a last progress report before pupils embark on their GCSE courses. Parents can judge how well their children have adapted to secondary school and teachers have another yardstick to add to their own assessment of achievement in the three years of Key Stage 3.

Whatever their continuing reservations, some of the unions' original anxiety about the tests has now evaporated. There is no prospect, for example, of the results being used to compile league tables of schools. Gillian Shephard, the Education and Employment Secretary, has ruled out such a development for the moment, and it is hard to imagine the tests ever meriting more than a largely unnoticed line in the tables recording GCSE and A-level results.

Parents can make their own local comparisons, however, since the results have to be published in annual reports. With the Office for Standards in Education reporting widespread underachievement in the early years of secondary school,

prospective applicants may find the results a useful guide to the evenness of quality through a school.

Criticisms of the length and character of the tests were addressed by Sir Ron Dearing in his review of the national curriculum.

The papers to be sat by 14-year-olds next term will occupy less time and be more clearly focused than those which provoked the union boycott.

Large numbers of teachers have been involved in drawing up the latest version, which will differ only marginally from last year's. The main change then, to introduce external marking, will also be continued but with new safeguards on quality.

The School Curriculum and Assessment Authority acknowledged flaws in the initial operation, especially in English. Ministers' agreement to lift the marking burden from teachers created a demand, for an unprecedented number of external markers, many of them inevitably inexperienced.

About 13 per cent of schools asked for papers to be re-marked and 4 per cent had some levels changed. This year the marking scheme has been clarified, extra



training introduced and the sampling system stepped up to ensure that the process runs more smoothly.

For most parents, however, the priority will be to ensure that 14-year-olds are fully prepared for the tests. The results will look after themselves.

Few schools will make direct use of the results, which come too late to influence the choice of GCSE subjects, other than for a late change of plan when next year's courses are about to begin. But pupils will want to do their best and will know that the outcome forms part of their school record when decisions are being made before entry to the sixth form or college.

The mathematics and science tests lend themselves particularly to revision, which might be carried out in a relaxed way over the Easter holidays. For English, practice rather than revision may be of most assistance, although a rereading of the school's chosen Shakespeare play would be an obvious starting point.

Many 14-year-olds will get their first taste of the examination hall in May. The tests at seven and 11 were introduced too late for them to have

experienced even that degree of formality, and their schools' end-of-year tests (where they exist) will have had a different atmosphere and purpose.

Parents may want to ensure that their children are familiar with the format of the tests and know precisely what is to be covered in them. In most cases, schools will already have performed this function, although some prefer to leave discussion of the tests until the start of the summer term.

The basic rules of revision are the same for 14-year-olds as for those sitting GCSE. realistic targets, find somewhere with as few distractions as possible, look back regularly to reinforce the memory, ask a teacher if there are sections you do not understand fully. Every teenager develops different revision techniques, some of which may look ineffective but may suit the individual.

In the week of the tests, the rules are even more basic. The most obvious, but easily forgotten, is to establish exactly when and where each paper is to be sat. After that, it is a matter of reading the questions carefully, making sure that answers are clear and allocating time sensibly. The tests all show how many marks are allocated for each question.



For many of this year's 14-year-olds the tests will provide their first taste of examination-hall formality

## ENGLISH: READING, WRITING AND CRITICAL ANALYSIS

### Brush up your Shakespeare

English assessors are looking for a lively mind and a firm grasp of language from the best candidates in this year's tests.

Questions on the reading comprehension passage are designed to assess pupils' understanding, inference and deduction, response and critical ideas. In the writing test, markers will look for a variety of sentence styles and a range of vocabulary in a piece which begins and ends arrestingly.

Schools have already been told which scenes to study for the Shakespeare test. Last year pupils often made the mistake of repeating the plot rather than analysing the text for significance. Assessors said:

"The questions offer an angle on the scene and invite pupils to show their understanding of and response to that perspective. It is hoped the questions prompt a re-thinking, rather than pupils feeling they should repeat what they have been told in class."

Various ways of testing Shakespeare are being given a trial in 1996, for a possible revamp of the paper for 1997.

Many schools asked for Key Stage 3 English papers to be re-marked last year, the first time that external markers had been used. As a result, more than 20,000 pupils had grades changed.

One of the biggest problems was the bunching of marks at

Levels 4 and 5, and insufficient recognition of achievement at Levels 6 and 7.

Although teachers will again be scrutinising their candidates' marks closely, the School Curriculum and Assessment Authority has made several changes to try to improve the reliability of the marking process, including:

- Telling markers to award grades for the overall quality of an answer, rather than for individual points.

- Grades for spelling and handwriting will be subsumed into the overall writing mark, to reduce the number of judgments a marker has to make.

- The marking scheme will

include new criteria for "above Level 7" and "below Level 4" to encourage markers to use the full mark range. All markers will have to submit sample papers for approval before being allowed to continue.

Reading and writing is covered in paper one, on the morning of Wednesday, May 8. Shakespeare is in paper two the following morning.

Teachers have been asked to emphasise to pupils that they should take into account the marks available for each answer so they spend their time appropriately, and that if an instruction is not clear, they can ask an invigilator for help.

DAVID CHARTER

### Getting into the character

THE writing and comprehension paper for 14-year-olds includes prompts advising on areas which need to be covered in each answer.

Last year's passage, from a story about evacuees, had a question asking what was learnt about the main character's thoughts and feelings. The prompts said candidates should comment on what she did, how she described things and how she was affected by her family's comments.

The Shakespeare paper requires analysis of a prepared scene from *Julius Caesar*, *Romeo and Juliet* or *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.

Questions will follow last year's pattern when candidates had either to put themselves in the position of one of the characters to show what they thought of the events in the scene, or to explain the differences between two key characters and whether they were trustworthy.



Romeo and Juliet is one of the Shakespeare set texts

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## SCIENCE: MASTER THE TERMINOLOGY

### Mind your language, please

PUPILS are being advised to brush up on their knowledge of scientific terms after answers last year showed much confusion over the exact meaning of technical language.

Assessors are also advising candidates to read the paper carefully and stick to the instructions after a series of errors in science tests caused by questions not being answered fully. Marks were lost last year when children simply used description when they were being asked to analyse, explain or compare.

This year's science tests, on the morning and afternoon of Monday, May 13, are again in tiered papers at Levels 3 to 6 and Levels 5 to 7.

A good knowledge of scientific vocabulary is essential to satisfy markers who want evidence of reasoning and deduction.

At the lower levels last year, pupils asked to identify parts of the human body had little trouble with the heart and lungs, but the kidney was sometimes wrongly labelled the gut, stomach or spleen.

On a question about fuels, food was often given in response to a question on which fuels can be stored in sacks, but marked wrong given the context of the question. Less than a third of pupils were able to identify two waste products when fuels burn.

Half of the candidates could not describe the forces acting on a rocket accurately.

On the higher-level papers, only a third could explain the function of a sperm head. Wrong answers included "giving directions" and "finding its way", because a more scientifically precise answer was expected.

Most pupils knew that the Sun was the star in our solar system, but the majority showed they did not understand the difference between "renewable" and "recyclable" energy. In another problem with scientific terms, a question on filtration where the process was "distillation" was often answered incorrectly as "evaporation" or "condensation".

Below, sample questions from last year.

12 Most pollen grains are transferred from one flower to another either by wind or by insects.

Look at the drawings below which show pollen grains from three different plants.

(a) Using your observations:

1. State the method by which each of these pollen grains is transferred.
2. Give a careful explanation for the method you have chosen each time.

Write your answers in the table.

name of plant	method by which pollen is transferred	explanation for method chosen
pine		
sunflower		
lupin		

3 marks

## Key Stage 2

SOME of the topics included in Wednesday's

main article on science for 11-year-olds have been removed from the curriculum to be tested this year.

Pupils are no longer required to know about plant competition in the biological section and both weathering and the role of oxygen have been removed from materials and their properties. The physical processes section no longer covers the difference between renewable and non-renewable fuels, energy transfer, planets other than the Earth, the Moon and the Sun, refraction, or the colours of the spectrum and prisms.

Below, sample questions from last year.

13 Most pollen grains are transferred from one flower to another either by wind or by insects.

Look at the drawings below which show pollen grains from three different plants.

(a) Using your observations:

1. State the method by which each of these pollen grains is transferred.
2. Give a careful explanation for the method you have chosen each time.

Write your answers in the table.

name of plant	method by which pollen is transferred	explanation for method chosen
pine		
sunflower		
lupin		

3 marks

14 It is a sunny day. Aisha is using the sunlight to signal to Sarah.

(a) What simple object could Aisha use to send bright flashes of sunlight to Sarah?

(b) What does this object do to the rays of the Sun?

maximum 2 marks

## MATHEMATICS: PLEASE EXPLAIN

### Happy with the hows but not with the whys

Many pupils taking last year's mathematics tests for 14-year-olds had trouble expressing themselves clearly enough to gain full marks on the questions calling for explanations of their approach. David Charter writes.

The national curriculum stresses the importance of pupils justifying and explaining their mathematics, preferably with drawings and diagrams rather than prose. This is reflected in the award of 10 per cent of the marks for their explanations and justifications.

Pupils also struggled with more complex written calculations, leading to calls for a calculator-free paper. The School Curriculum and Assessment Authority is reviewing whether calculators should be banned on one of the two papers next year, which may make pupils focus more on expressing their mathematical reasoning. However, the national curriculum also aims to promote "appropriate, effective and efficient" use of calculators, which this year can be used in both tests.

There is a choice of four tiered papers at 14, the easiest covering Levels 3 to 5 and the hardest Levels 6 to 8.

Last year at Level 3, pupils had difficulty in explaining the properties of shapes and in using a number pattern to solve a problem. At Level 4, estimating fractions and percentages was done well, as was reading and interpreting co-ordinates from a graph, but children had difficulty solving

problems without a calculator. Level 5 questions on algebraic expressions were also found hard, as was dividing by a two-digit number without a calculator. At Level 6, the questions children found harder included those about using sensible estimates to calculate rough amounts.

Level 7 questions which were answered very well included those asking for a quadratic equation to be solved and finding the volume of a prism. More difficult was applying Pythagoras' theorem and explaining how increasing the number of trials in an experiment will lead to a better estimate of probability.

The many aspects of Level 8 questions which pupils found difficult included substituting negative values into formulae and calculating the probability of a combined event.

A spokesman for the School Curriculum and Assessment Authority, commenting on last year's tests, said: "Overall, pupils were able to identify which mathematics they should use in answering questions. At all levels, pupils had more difficulty with those questions which required mathematical reasoning and problem-solving skills."

The time allowed for this year's extension paper has been cut to one hour. Very few pupils tried this paper last year and many teachers took the view that the GCSE itself would be a more appropriate test for the high-flyers.

● Above left, a sample question from last year

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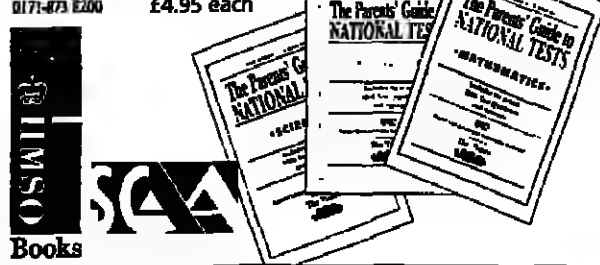
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Further particulars and application forms may be obtained from the Executive Secretary, Japan Foundation Endowment Committee, c/o The University of Sheffield, Fifth Court, Western Bank, Sheffield S10 2TN, by whom completed forms must be received by Friday 3 May 1996 at the latest. Separate forms are used for research grant applications and studentship applications, and enquirers should specify in which they are interested.

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# Midfield player returns from exile to strengthen emerging England

## Ince's restoration paints bright future

By DAVID MILLER

WHATEVER has become of our island race? The Empire was long ago released, but now we are bullied into submission over our fishing rights and doggy beef by the fickle French and others in a supposed European Union, and it takes a Bulgarian to remind us that England might win a football championship.

I happen to agree with Dimitar Penche, the coach of the Bulgaria team beaten by England at Wembley, who said as much on Wednesday night. Playing at home, as in the World Cup in 1966, England have every reason to believe that they can reach the final of the European championship this summer. The metamorphosis of the team under Terry Venables, as it was under Alf Ramsey 30 years ago, is no less steady, if equally unspectacular.

Fundamental to the performance on Wednesday, in which the general shape of a coherent team began to emerge, was the return, after 13 months, of Paul Ince. Physically as tough and intimidating as Nobby Stiles yet, with a full set of his own teeth, less demonic in appearance, Ince brought a stability that infected everyone around him.

I do not yearn for another Stiles, and there would be no benefit were Ince to bring discredit to the England shirt. Yet, if he has learnt in Italy to discipline the emotions that boil over as at Crystal Palace last season, the tenacity of his tactics, so reminiscent of Johan Neeskens, and the rapidity of his distribution will quicken the pulse and the fortunes of any England side.

Venables said that, with Ince's reintroduction, the team was tactically compact and had better shape. "The more we play, the better it'll be," he said. Let us remember that Venables has had only 14 matches as yet, a third of a League season, and has a win-loss record of 7-1.

Although he does not have



Ince, who began rebuilding his England career with a powerful performance against Bulgaria at Wembley. Photograph: Marc Aspland

the five world-class players that Ramsey had in Banks, Wilson, Moore, Bobby Charlton and Greaves, and later Peters, Ball and Hurst, he does have a formation that is acquiring uncanny similarities.

Stone on the right flank is as industrious as was Ball (or Coppell) on penalty area to penalty area; McManaman on the left may not have the intuition of Peters, but is more threatening with his dribbling and needs extended experience. Ferdinand brought an acceleration superior to Hurst,

and Shearer, but needs to score the easy ones; and the level-paced Sheringham brought a flair to the supporting attacking role that might have upstaged even the 100 per cent Hurst.

I do not need reminding that Gascoigne, even if playing for 90 minutes rather than every other ten, is not Bobby Charlton. If it becomes undeniable that Gascoigne cannot last a whole match — already evident, many would say — then McManaman can be switched to his normal position in central midfield, with

Barmby introduced on the left. So, there is all to play for.

Ramsey's formation fell into shape only in December 1965, against Spain in Madrid, and did not give cause for public optimism until Poland were beaten in Katowice in the last match before the World Cup finals.

Nor is there much substance to the allegation that Bulgaria came to Wembley without ambition. They may have been negative in the first half, but they competed aggressively for possession. When Borimirov replaced

Iordanov in midfield, they became, under the direction of the ubiquitous Lechkov, a potent force which may make nonsense of the bookmakers' long odds come June.

England's comparative decline in the second half arose partly because of Gascoigne's fading contribution, partly because the front four — Stone, Sheringham, Ferdinand and McManaman — did not drop into a possession game, eliminating the optimistic hopes of a coach in whom few have so far placed confidence.

Although Southgate was horribly exposed late in the match, saved only by Seaman's competence and a handling offence by Borimirov immediately before what would have been an equalising goal by Kostadinov, he might be preferred to Pallister, Southgate being a more constructive defender with the ball. Further exposure to Adriatic/Balkan skills, against Croatia next month, should confirm the advance of a team and a coach in whom few have so far placed confidence.

## Equine valour bridges the gap between east and west

On Tuesday, Nad Al Sheba racecourse, in Dubai, consisted of the excellent mile-and-a-half circuit of bespoke packed sand, the club — with viewing terraces on ground and first floor and an Arabian grandstand which seems small, lacking in depth, until you remember that they need make no provision for Totalisator (Muslims are not permitted to gamble), bars (ditto drink) or hog-roasts (pork is out).

What they have — and we do not — is a lawn where racegoers face east, kneel down and pray for divine guidance before selecting the six horses for their one, free jackpot ticket, an activity upon which Allah appears to smile.

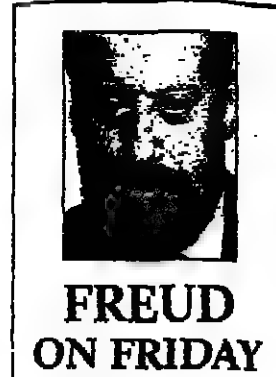
It took God six days to create the world. Between Tuesday lunchtime and Wednesday morning, Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid al Maktoum had translated Nad Al Sheba into a massive arena replete with floodlights, flags, a 100-seat press centre, marquees to seat a thousand diners, a tented village, a family enclosure, batteries of television screens, parkful of golf trolleys serving as Sheikh-mobiles and 150 white-robed security men who made us realise

that the mod "VIP" on our badges is no more than a stepping stone on the way to VVIP status accorded the people who matter.

The Dubai World Cup, the richest race ever staged, brought three competitors from the United States, two from Great Britain, one each from Australia and Japan to take on the quartet of stars from the home country... and for the architect of this theatre, there was a nightmare scenario: were the Maktoum horses to fill the first three places, the likelihood that foreign owners would never again send their horses thousands of energy-sapping miles to do battle in the desert on a surface to which no other thoroughbred is accustomed.

An estimated 15,000 people turned up and the nightmare never looked like becoming reality. In the dramatic, floodlit contest that denied the home crowds supplication, the Emirati best contestant was Tamayuz, in fifth place, comprehensively beaten by three Americans and one English rival.

A disappointing result for the Sheikh, said the pundits. When his Highness sits down to consider the matter, he is likely to feel that the cost of around £10 million (some of it spent on me) is a bargain sum to promote Dubai to the status of leading player in world racing — which it assumed with Cigar's victory. This cannot occur without some displacement at the top.



FREUD ON FRIDAY

Thursday, Aintree. The best-known, biggest betting race in the world has two warm-up days featuring well-rewarded contests. Tomorrow, there will be a nine-figure television audience with a crowd of 60,000.

On the first day of the meeting, about a third of that number turned up and the difference between devout Muslims imploring divine intervention and the noisy bustle of flat-vowelled, hard-drinking citizens is as if Kipling were right.

There is little racing at Aintree, but that on offer is special and joyous to behold: the buzz of knowledgeable racegoers is peculiar to this track elsewhere, folk wandering around gravitating between bar, paddock, bookmakers and village point. At Liverpool, wherever they walk, they walk with a will.

It is hugely important for the overall pattern of the National Hunt racing that the Grand National retains its place as the handicap of the year. Ask 100 citizens about this event and they remember four happenings — three of them disasters: Devon Loch's phantom jump, Foinavon's 100-1 victory after mayhem at the 23rd fence and Captain Brown's 1993 cock-up at the start. On the credit side is Red Rum.

The dream scenario for tomorrow is an absence of animal-rights campaigners, a race free of fatalities and a winner who will catch the public imagination, for we need another hero who will go on to open garden fences and supermarkets.

Party Politics, the only runner with a positive National record (one win, one second) might be such an animal: the tallest horse in training, handsome with a medical record that would dissuade Bupa from securing him membership. His far tomorrow might be a high wind, for one of his many operations involved the insertion of a metal pipe in his throat.

Unlike Dubai, racegoers would be wise to watch the west, for there is a likely trio from Ireland: my money is on Life of a Lord, I backed Cigar. I am on a roll.

## Russian lesson for McCarthy

By PETER BALL

THE Russians are coming, and the evidence of Wednesday night in Dublin was that Onopko, Nikiforov, Mostovoi, Kolyanov and their colleagues will be an adornment to the European championship finals.

If the quality of Russia's 2-0 win served to whet the appetite for the summer, the lessons for Mick McCarthy, the new Ireland manager, were harder. McCarthy could take real pleasure from the emergence of Shay Given, 19, the Blackburn Rovers reserved goalkeeper, who played with impressive composure and

sureness on his debut. Mark Kennedy, also 19, had his moments, too, while Roy Keane was a powerful performer until he betrayed himself with the stupid kick in the dying moments that brought his dismissal. That, presumably, was not what McCarthy had in mind when he said "Keane led by example".

As well as by individual performances, the manager also said that he was encouraged by the second-half performance that saw his team create a number of clear opportunities.

Overall, though, the gap in

class was yawning. "They are what we are striving to be," Alan Kernaghan, the defender, said. It will take some time to achieve that end. McCarthy followed the season's trend with three central defenders and asked his team to pass the ball. It gave a new shape, but it was impossible to hide a fairly basic model underneath the surface polish.

"We showed in the second half that we can compete passing the ball around," McCarthy said, although Ireland looked most dangerous, and the Russians at their least composed, when the ball was lofted into the box towards Quinn and Casarino. "It is strange," Jason McAteer said, "but I felt we created our best chances in the second half when we fell back at times to the old way of doing things."

## Rushden set transfer record

NON-LEAGUE FOOTBALL BY WALTER GAMMIE

RUSHDEN and Diamonds yesterday broke the transfer record between non-League clubs when they signed Carl Alford from Kettering Town for £85,000. The Beazer Homes League leaders had tried to sign Alford, 24, in December, but the England semi-professional international forward decided to stay at Rockingham Road.

Roger Ashby, the Rushden manager, said: "At the time, he was looking to play in the Football League and we respected that decision. We went back to Kettering on Wednesday night and asked if he was still available. He said yes and he was happy to come."

Alford, who has scored 22 goals in the Vauxhall Conference this season, has signed a 2½-year contract and clearly

anticipates that his drop in status will be short-lived. He goes into the side tomorrow for a match against Halesowen Town, the second-placed side, with Rushden six points ahead with two matches in hand.

Ashby said: "He's scored 70 goals in the past three seasons. For somebody so young, he's got a lot of talent about him. He's an investment for the future of the club. We want him to take us into the Football League and I'm certain he will help us to achieve that aim."

Stevens Borough, the Conference leaders, shaken by their 2-1 defeat at Hedgesford Town on Monday that ended their 17-match unbeaten run, recruited four players: David Howell, the former coach at Birmingham

City, Alan Paris, from Slough Town, Neil Trebble, a former Stevenage player, from Scarborough, and Andy Anshar, from Peterborough United.

Working, whose fourth successive win — 2-1 away to Telford United on Tuesday — moved them to within four points of the leaders having played a match more, signed Darren Adams, a forward, from Cardiff City, on loan. Their credentials will be tested by their next three matches, against Hedgesford (home), Macclesfield Town (home) and Stevenage (away).

Only two clubs are expected to be relegated from the Conference after the National Joint Liaison Committee ruled that there was not a suitable candidate for promotion from the UniBond League.

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Forward Darren Shaw, above, has played for the London Broncos, who can trace their roots back to Fulham, for three years. He also played for Scotland in the World Cup and Super League Nines.

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12-2101 PEARLACROFT 22 (B) J Brown 5-11-7... N Foster 65  
13-2101 PEARLACROFT 22 (B) J Brown 5-11-7... N Foster 65

1-2111 SOLBA 10 (B) J Brown 5-11-7... N Foster 65  
2-2102 PEARLACROFT 22 (B) J Brown 5-11-7... N Foster 65  
3-2101 PEARLACROFT 22 (B) J Brown 5-11-7... N Foster 65  
4-2101 PEARLACROFT 22 (B) J Brown 5-11-7... N Foster 65  
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6-2101 PEARLACROFT 22 (B) J Brown 5-11-7... N Foster 65  
7-2101 PEARLACROFT 22 (B) J Brown 5-11-7...















Christopher Irvine prepares for a new departure in sporting tradition

## Rugby league springs into summer era

ANYONE who gazed into a crystal ball a year ago, and predicted that rugby league would switch to a spring-summer season starting in Paris, would have been deemed mad.

Not so very long ago, radicalism was defined as women being granted access to a club committee bar.

Yet tonight — family-friendly, nostalgia-free — the European Super League will be launched before 15,000 mostly novice watchers at the Charley Stadium, the home to the new Paris Saint-Germain side.

That, anyway, is the vision. Sheffield Eagles, the visitors tonight, have partly fulfilled it, although the club's 12-year existence illuminates the



harsh realities to be faced. Boasting a home — the Don Valley Stadium — with a grandeur more proximate to Paris than the narrow rugby league heartland of northern Britain, their support numbers only 2,000, despite the team enjoying its most successful season to date.

The money that the sport craved, and received almost overnight, meant that it could afford the vision. The danger is that the communities that have supported it for 101 years can see little more than a blur. After all that time on the backstreets, rugby league is on a six-lane highway not quite knowing whether riches or ruin lie at the end.

One thing is certain — there can be no U-turn. Summer, Super League and television are inextricably linked. The best opportunity to fulfil the game's century-old missionary agenda remains, but continuing financial uncertainty at many clubs, the game's implosion in Australia (where Super League is outlawed pending an appeal) and the consequent doubts about the future at international level



Entat, centre, the Paris Saint-Germain scrum half, at the heart of the action as the French club prepares for its match against Sheffield tonight

form a ruffled backdrop to the Paris opening.

A pan-European game, trans-global play-offs and city franchises in Great Britain remain as ultimate objectives. However, there are a lot of unresolved issues. Not least is the question of how many people will be tempted by a sport busily reinventing itself for mass consumption in the summer market.

Summer rugby had been a fanciful notion for some years. The £87 million backing for Super League by The News Corporation, parent company of *The Times*, which materialised last April, was all the incentive necessary, although the subsequent messy issue of club mergers alienated many supporters.

A five-month competition, hemmed in by early rounds of

the Challenge Cup and domestic play-offs, guarantees Super League clubs only 11 home fixtures. The money is being drip-fed and half is tied to ground improvements. Moreover, the distractions that summer brings have tended to be overlooked. A long and inactive winter will be a bleak one for many of the 35 professional clubs and could see the revived merger proposals enter by stealth.

Rugby league finds itself up against the European football championship finals and the Olympic Games, in addition to the familiar list of summer sporting counter-attractions. At Halifax — the Blue Sox — there is unashamed confirmation that league is the "core product" and "entertainment

seekers" are the people whom the club must target in order to survive a difficult first summer.

The British leisure industry is unlikely to shudder at these days, fireworks, cheerleaders, singers, barbecues and craft fairs at league grounds, which will wrap around an Academy

**'People will pay if they get value for money'**

At Bradford, which sees Super League as a panacea for a club that was hidebound by its old ways, there is an air of optimism. Peter Deakin, the Bulls' marketing executive, said: "Tradition should not hold back progress. The fans are our biggest sponsors, but they have been short-changed for years. People will pay if the perception is that they are getting value for money."

Super League brings manifest changes, with the new viewer in mind. Squad numbers, as in the FA Carling Premiership, make a first appearance. For live games on Sky, a television official will adjudicate on line decisions and there will be giant video screens at grounds. Three of nine rule changes will further

speed up a sport already played at breakneck pace. Where rugby league, mercifully, usually gets it right is on the pitch, and there are the teams and individuals to bring credibility, minus the mud, to a year of chaotic restructuring. Wigan are best pencilled in as champions, but a definite weakening means that they are not the racing certainties of old. Of the pretenders, St Helens possess the personnel to sneak ahead, with a new-look Bradford possibly spearheading the Yorkshire challenge.

The progress of the new South Wales club in the second division will be monitored closely, especially as a Cardiff team could be fast-tracked into Super League next year. What a difference a year makes.

## The anatomy of racism

**African Harvest. Radio 4, 9.15am.**

So strangely does Allan Little begin his series that I feared I had been sent the wrong preview tape by mistake. How does the BBC's man in southern Africa open his first talk, which is about racism? With a flashback to 19th-century Edinburgh, when the anatomist, Dr Robert Knox, purchased cadavers from Burke and Hare, not realising how the murdering duo came by them. Knox imported a bunch of the murdering duo to England and showed them to a southern African tribesman. "More animals in proportion, worse gathering of prurient scientists," sneered *The Times*. Knox's book, *The Races of Man*, traced everything back to race, even morality. He was, says Little, linking Knox with Africa, a pioneering racist. It is a role in which I had never imagined him.

**Mining the Archive. Radio 3, 3pm.**

There is a rare treat embedded in Fiona Talkington's programme about Vaughan Williams in the 1950s, his final decade. We hear the voice of the grand old man himself. He imagines himself into the skin of Bach in the 20th century, delighted to make the acquaintance of the clarinet for the first time and hearing his great works performed not by 16 voices but 300, and not by a ramshackle orchestra but by a large ensemble. It was not exactly what Johann Sebastian might have expected to hear, says Vaughan Williams, but it was probably what he had in mind.

Peter Davall

## RADIO 1

FM Stereo 4.00am Give Warren 6.30  
Chris Evans 9.00 Simon Mayo 12.00  
Lisa (Arson) 12.30-12.45pm  
Newstalk, and at 1.15 The Net 2.00  
Nicky Campbell 4.00 Mark Goodier, and  
at 6.30-6.45 Newbeat 7.00 Essential  
Selection 10.00 John Peel 1.00am  
Radio 1 Rap Show

## RADIO 2

FM Stereo 6.00am Sarah Kennedy  
7.30 Wake Up to Wogan 9.30 Brian  
Matthew 11.30 Jimmy Young 2.00pm  
Dubois Thresher 3.30 Ed Sheeran 5.05  
John Dunn 7.00 For Love Not Money  
7.30 Friday Night is Music Night 8.45  
Bogarde on Film 9.00 Listen to the Band  
10.00 Mike Nicholson, Radio 2 Arts  
Programme 12.05am Digby Fawcett  
1.00 Charles Nova

## RADIO 5 LIVE

5.00am Morning Reports 6.00 The  
Breakfast Programme, incl 6.55, 7.55  
singing preview 8.55 The Magazine, with  
Diana Madill, incl Video Review,  
Euronews and at 11.30 Science News  
12.00 Midday with Mar, incl at 12.34pm  
Menzies, and at 1.15 Entertainment  
News 2.05 Rucuse on Five, incl at 3.45  
Entertainment News 4.00 Nationwide,  
incl at 5.45 Entertainment News 7.00  
News Extra 7.20 Friday Sport, Paul St  
Germain v Sheffield Wednesday 8.35 Stop  
Press 10.05 Entertainment Superhighway,  
with Quentin Cooper 11.00 Night  
Extra, incl at 11.15 The Financial World  
Tonight 12.05am Alan Jones 2.05 Up  
At Night, with Richard Daltyn

## TALK RADIO

6.00am Sandy Wen 7.00 Simon Bates  
10.00 Jonathan King 12.00 Tommy  
Boyd 2.00pm Anna Rieburn 4.00 Scott  
Cheshire 7.00 Sean Bolger 9.00 Maz  
Doe 10.00 Miles Allen 1.00-6.00am Mike  
Dickin

## WORLD SERVICE

All times in GMT. 5.00am Newsday  
5.30 Europe Today 6.00 Newsday 6.30  
Europe Today 7.00 News 7.15 Off the  
Shelf 7.30 Minutefields 8.00 News 8.10  
Falls 8.15 Music Review 9.00 News in  
German 9.15 Faith 9.45 Sport 10.00  
Newsday 10.30 BBC English 10.45 Off  
the Shelf 11.00 Newsday 11.30 Menden  
12.00 News 12.05pm Business  
12.15 Britain Today 12.30 Science in  
Action 1.00 Newshour 2.00 News 2.05  
Outlook 2.30 Multitrack 3.00 News in  
German 3.15 Music Review 4.00 World  
News 4.15 The World Today 4.30 News  
in German 5.00 Europe Today 5.30  
Business 5.45 Sport 6.00 Newsday  
6.30 News in German 7.00 News  
Summary 7.05 Outlook 7.25 Words of  
Faith 7.30 Multitrack 8.00 Newshour  
9.00 World News 9.05 Business 9.15  
Britain Today 9.30 People and Politics  
10.00 Newsday 10.30 The New Europe  
10.45 Sport 11.00 World News 11.10  
Spotlight 11.15 Minutefields 11.45 The  
Farming World 12.00 Newsday 12.45  
12.30am From the Weeklies 12.45  
Britain Today 1.00 World News 1.10  
Press Review 1.15 Seven Days 1.30  
Jazz Now and Then 1.45 Good Books  
2.00 Newsday 2.30 People and Politics  
3.00 World News 3.15 Sports Roundup  
3.30 Vintage Chart Show 4.00  
Newsday 4.30 Jazz 4.45 Seven Days

## CLASSIC FM

4.00am Mark Griffiths 6.00 Mike Read  
9.00 Henry Kelly 12.00 Susanah  
Simons 2.00pm Concerto 3.00 Jamie  
Cock 6.00 Night Horse 7.30 Paul Cayle  
Verdict 8.00 Evening Concert 10.00  
Michael McNeill 1.00 Robert Booth

## VIRGIN RADIO

6.00am Russ 'n' Jon's Breakfast 9.00  
Richard Skinner 12.00 Graham Dene  
4.00pm Nicky Horne 7.30 Paul Cayle  
10.00 Mark Forrest 2.00-6.00am How  
and Pearce

## RADIO 3

6.00am On Air, includes Rossini  
(Overture), Elgar  
(Symphony No 2 in E flat), Vivaldi (Violin  
Concerto in D minor, Op 6 No 6)  
Mozart (Piano Concerto No 9 in E flat, K271)  
9.00 Morning Collection with  
Paul Gambaccini, includes  
Bach (Brandenburg Concerto No 3 in G flat)  
10.00 Musical Encounters,  
includes Artist of the Week:  
Kathryn Spang, piano Ravel  
Nocturne, 10.10 Vivaldi  
(Overture No 5 in B flat)  
12.00 Composer of the Week:  
Felix Mendelssohn, with  
1.00pm Bristol Lunchtime  
Concert: Stravinsky Plus,  
from St George's, Brandon  
Hill, featuring the music of  
Igor Stravinsky, who died 25  
years ago  
2.00 Schools, Let's Make a Story  
2.15 Music Box 2.30 Dance  
Workshop 2.50 Poetry Corner  
3.00 The Fifties, Mining the  
Archive: Ralph Vaughan  
Williams — The Final  
Harvest, See Choice  
4.20 The Fifties, Hits of the  
Fifties (4/4)

4.30 Africa Past and Present,  
Janel Topp-Ferguson, curator  
of the international music  
Collection at the National  
Sound Archive, introduces a  
selection of recordings of  
African traditional music  
5.00 The Music Machine  
5.15 In Tune with Andrew Green,  
Rubinstein (Valse Caprice in E  
flat), Glazunov (Valse, Op  
34), Monteverdi (Lauda  
Jusselme, 1610 Vespers)  
7.30 The Fifties, Towards the  
Millennium, Live Ensemble  
performs Martin (Nones)  
Messiah (Le Merle noir),  
Stravinsky (Septet), 8.10  
Fifties, with the Fifties  
Humphrey Burton talks to  
Pierre Boulez, 8.30  
Dallapiccola (Poco musica  
notturna), Lutoslawski (Dance  
Preludes), Hindemith (Octet)  
9.30 Young Poets  
9.40 Hear and Now, Peter Paul  
Nash (Apothirae Choruses),  
Toni Wishart (Tongues of  
Fire)  
12.00-1.00am Britten at the  
Opera: No Song, No  
Supper, with Ian Paton,  
singer, and Elizabeth  
McCormack, soprano (f)

## RADIO 4

5.55am Shipping (LW only) 6.30  
News 6.10 Farming Today  
6.25 Prayer for the Day 6.30  
Today, incl 6.30, 7.00, 7.30,  
8.00, 8.30 News 6.55, 7.55  
Weather 7.25, 8.25 Sport  
7.45 Thought for the Day  
8.40 Yesterday in Parliament  
8.58 Weather  
9.00 News 9.05 Desert Island  
Discs: Kyril Vaynskiy  
9.45 African Harvest, See Choice  
10.00-10.30 News, Beyond  
Reasonable Doubt (FM  
only) (2/5)  
10.00 An Act of Worship (LW only)  
10.15 The Concept of Love (LW only)  
10.30 Woman's Hour  
11.30 The Natural History  
Programme  
12.00 News, You and Yours  
12.25pm The Food Programme  
12.55 Weather  
1.00 The World at One  
1.40 The Archers (f) 1.55  
Shipping Forecast  
2.00 News: Classic Serial: All  
Things Betray Thee by  
Owen Thomas (1/5) (f)  
3.00 News: The Afternoon Shift  
4.00 News 4.05 Kaleidoscope,  
4.45 Short Story: Scary Movies  
(f)  
5.00 PM 5.55 Weather

6.00 Six O'Clock News 6.30  
Going Places presented by  
David Stafford, including  
further tales of Romany  
7.00 News 7.05 The Archers  
7.20 Pick of the Week  
8.05 Any Questions? With MP's  
Simon Hughes, Tessa Jowell  
and David Willetts and writer  
A.J. Wilson  
8.50 Points of Departure, Bridget  
Kendall describes the  
horrendous hospital treatment  
experienced by a friend in  
Moscow (2/5) (f)  
9.15 Letter from America  
9.30 Kaleidoscope Features: How  
Strange the Change (f) 9.58  
Weather  
10.00 The World Tonight, with  
Robin Lustig  
10.45 Book at Bedtime: Picnic at  
Hanging Rock by Joan  
Lindsay, Read by Lisa Harrow  
(10/10)  
11.00 Week Ending  
11.25 Tea Junction with Patrick  
Herman  
11.45 Today in Parliament  
12.00 News, incl 12.27am Weather  
12.30 The Late Book: Metroland  
(10/10)  
12.48 Shipping Forecast 1.00am  
World Service

FREQUENCY GUIDE. RADIO 1, FM 97.8-99.8. RADIO 2, FM 88.0-90.2. RADIO 3, FM 90.2-92.4. RADIO 4, FM 92.4-94.5. LW 198; MW 198 (12.45-5.55am). CLASSIC FM, FM 100-102. VIRGIN RADIO, FM 105.8; MW 1197, 1215. TALK RADIO UK, MW 1053, 1089. Television and radio listings compiled by Peter Dear, Gillian Maxey, Rosemary Smith and Susan Thomson



Christopher Irvine predicts the finishing order for the first Super League season

## 1. ST HELENS

Coach: Shaun McRae (Aus), appointed January 1996.  
Ground: Knowsley Road (cap 19,300).  
Nicknames: Saints.  
Transfers In: D McVey (Sydney Tigers).  
Out: None.  
So egg has dripped down St Helens' faces before, but they, not Wigan, are at Wembley, and there is the talent in Goulding, Newlove, Jory and company, under McRae's strict tutelage, to convert the belief. Get the defence right and the rest will follow.  
Odds: 4-1.

## 2. WIGAN

Coach: Graeme West (NZ), appointed May 1994.  
Ground: Central Park (cap 24,000).  
Nicknames: Rhinos.  
Transfers In: None. Out: None.  
The empire is not falling on the basis of a premature Challenge Cup exit, but the air of invincibility has been shaken. An accent on youth.  
Odds: 100-30 on.

## 3. BRADFORD BULLS

Coach: Brian Smith (Aus), appointed June 1995.  
Ground: Widnespool (cap 12,000).  
Nicknames: Wolves.  
Transfers In: R Haines (Carlisle), T Kone-Love (New Zealand).  
Out: None.  
John Dorey and Alex Murphy are the "Unlikely Lads" who should, nonetheless, be able to reflect the shipwrecked side of last season. Signs of young talent in Harris and Southrop, with experienced helm men to pilot a mid-table course.  
Odds: 25-1.

## 4. WARRINGTON

Coach: John Dorey (Aus), appointed January 1996.  
Ground: Widnespool (cap 12,000).  
Nicknames: Wolves.  
Transfers In: R Haines (Carlisle), T Kone-Love (New Zealand).  
Out: None.  
John Dorey and Alex Murphy are the "Unlikely Lads" who should, nonetheless, be able to reflect the shipwrecked side of last season. Signs of young talent in Harris and Southrop, with experienced helm men to pilot a mid-table course.  
Odds: 25-1.

## 5. HALIFAX

Coach: Andy Goodway (Eng), appointed May 1994.  
Ground: Boundary Park (cap 20,000) and Watersheddings (cap 8,500).  
Nicknames: Bees.  
Transfers In: M Munro (South Sydney), A Patmore (Australian RL).  
Out: None.  
A side that beat Wigan last season was also decidedly inconsistent. Another roller-coaster ride probable. Oldham are still more cubes than bears, but should they repeat their trick of beating Wigan tomorrow, will deserve to be taken more seriously.  
Odds: 150-1.

## 6. LONDON BRONCOS

Coach: Tony Currie (Aus), appointed January 1996.  
Ground: The Valley, Charlton (cap 15,000).  
Nicknames: Broncos.  
Transfers In: G Allen, G Barwick, J Brown, J Minto, D Smith, T Tuley (all Australia).  
Out: P Haul, C McKenna, B Walker (all Australia).  
Making a success of a new life at Charlton is as important as on-field improvement. Enough redoubtable Australians, particularly with Gavin Allen's signing, to ensure that relegation is less of a problem than getting Londoners to take notice.  
Odds: 100-1.

## 7. SHEFFIELD EAGLES

Coach: Gary Hetherington (Eng), appointed December 1993.  
Ground: Don Valley Stadium (cap 25,000).  
Nicknames: Eagles.  
Transfers In: None. Out: None.  
No names, but the team with most heart. Claimed all scalp bar Wigan in the championship last season. Never to be underestimated, but the Eagles can fly low as well as soar high. Destined for mid-table scrapping.  
Odds: 80-1.

## 8. CASTLEFORD

Coach: John Joyner (Eng), appointed May 1993.  
Ground: Wheldon Road (cap 11,750).  
Nicknames: Tigers.  
Transfers In: G Anderson (Halifax), F Botica (Auckland), R Gray (Hull).  
Out: None.  
Making a success of a new life at Charlton is as important as on-field improvement. Enough redoubtable Australians, particularly with Gavin Allen's signing, to ensure that relegation is less of a problem than getting Londoners to take notice.  
Odds: 100-1.

## WORD-WATCHING

Answers from page 44  
**BUMBLE**  
(a) and (b). The eponym comes from the officious, overbearing beadle in Dickens's *Oliver Twist*. But a bumble is also an Oxford Vice-Chancellor's mace-bearer, and the "holy poker" or vergen in some ancient collegiate foundations. A self-important minor official is the best definition. *Bumbledom* is fussy officialdom, especially on the part of parish officers.  
**BUMMARIEE**  
(a) Middlemen or fishjobbers in Billingsgate Market, now removed from the City to Docklands. Sometimes ignorantly misapplied to Smithfield porters. It has been (implausibly) suggested that the word is a corruption of *bonne marie*, good fresh fish, *marie* being a French term for all kinds of fresh seafood.  
**KHITMUGAR**  
(c) The Raj's name for a table servant in the days of the Empire. Urdu from the Persian *khidmat* service + *-gar* agent-suffix. A male servant who waits at table. Also transliterated *khidmatgar*. "A khidmatgar who had drained off a bottle of her eau-de-Cologne."  
**SLUBBER**  
(c) A yarn-twister, someone who manipulates a slubbing-machine. To slub is to twist yarn after carding in preparation for spinning. A slub-weave has small (intentional) lumps in it. There are pubs in Lancashire and other Northern milling counties called the Slubber's Arms.

## SOLUTION TO WINNING CHESS MOVE

1... Qxd1; 2. Kd1 Ra1; 3. Qc1 b2 and White will emerge much material down.

Tonight on BBC2, see angels playing the harp.



The Strings Final, 7.30pm. BBC Young Musicians '96 Events.



مركز من الرقص



# Sting like a bee, float like a hippopotamus

When Cassius Clay announced in 1966 that his real name was Muhammad Ali, I remember that the main response from the public was one of indifference mingled with disbelief. This loud-mouth with his "pretty" face, and his unorthodox butterfly boxing, had now come up with a ridiculous, far-fetched grandiosity: if he had called himself King of the Zog People, the huffy resentment would have been about the same. No one ever doubted that Ali took it seriously, however. When his opponent Ernie Terrell refused to acknowledge the new name, Ali took it very badly. "What's my name?" Ali yelled nastily in the ring, as he bullied Terrell about the head. "What's my name?" It was a fight so unpleasant that the young Frank Bough on *BBC Sportsnight* pronounced it "an affront to human dignity".

Martin Davidson's *Reputations* last night (BBC2) was rather odd.

It was a thoughtful film, much less abrasive than the usual *Reputations*; its concern was, I suppose, to reverse the customary revisionist exercise and find the hero behind the dirt, instead of the dirt behind the hero. Its big mistake was to have Laurence Fishburne narrating, because for a while the combination of hagiography and soft American accent suggested a US documentary bought in for a series it didn't suit. Yet the material was of such high interest that one soon forgot all this: Ali was a brilliant subject for a fresh appraisal, emerging as a figure of great integrity, whose "I am the greatest" was not far from the truth.

Ali's biggest bout, of course, was with the American draft board. When he refused to fight in Vietnam, he was stripped of his citizenship and passport, and his licence to box was revoked. In retrospect, this swinging punishment now appears so obviously a

political conspiracy to squash an uppity black that it's surprising Oliver Stone hasn't made a film about it. Ali's fame was enormous, phenomenal, dangerous. "Even people who didn't like him, liked him." Many black Americans disagreed with his draft-dodging; they also disapproved of the Nation of Islam, with its advocacy of separatism. But nobody could deny the good he did for black Americans, and meanwhile we were telly viewers in Britain who always thank him for that scare he gave Michael Parkinson — almost on a par with Emu.

Big-mouth contests of another sort were to be found in *Wildlife on One* (BBC1, not Scotland), where hippos high-deep in water raised their enormous heads and did the alarming *Guernica* thing with their highly articulated jaws. This is the way they show off at each other, you

## REVIEW



Lynne Truss

see, and clearly their mothers never warned them that the wind might change while they were doing it. These hippos lived in a river in Zambia, and apart from not reading paperbacks, they have a life somewhat like human beings on holiday: they laze about in the water, come out to warm up, go back to cool down. Under water, they trot along lightly, the merest push from their dainty feet propelling them nicely through the fish and sparkle.

But as this excellent film demonstrated, this beast has a life much harder than it might appear. Every year it wallows happily in lagoons, and then the lagoons dry up. It moves to the river, and the river dries up. Hippos suffer and die in these lean times; an aerial shot of a thin tributary in a dry brown landscape, with a doomed hippo halfway up it, was very affecting, as was the protective behaviour of bereaved hippos when a dead body floated on the water. An amazing scene, in ghostly night-vision monochrome, showed pale hippos on a riverbank attempting to lunge on a pack of hyenas scavenging on the corpse. Sleds and meek, they were driven off by the dogs (which later made short work of a crocodile, too).

Apart from their terrible yawning problem, hippos seemed pleasant animals who don't ask for

much. As they stood on the bank in the dark, looking lumpy and sheepish, I was reminded of Thurbur's famous cartoon "What Have You Done With Dr Millmoss?", in which a snappy woman addresses a big solid animal who has clearly just eaten the missing man, but can't for the life of it remember.

Channel 4's *Undercover Britain* continues to astound, and not only for the revelations obtainable by secret filming. Last night Gary Thompson set out to expose the practice of ticket touting at football matches, and thus went undercover for several months, infiltrating the ticket brigade at Old Trafford, and filming incriminating conversations. How this man lives with his conscience I don't know, but the issue of trust and betrayal was never far from one's mind while watching his film. Thompson made friends with these blokes in

order to shop them on television, and that's really not nice. True, ticket touting is illegal, and it affects the pockets of football fans, but it's hard to see how anyone could get sufficiently impassioned to do such a weaselly thing on purpose. One could only suspect a hidden agenda.

Does Channel 4 offer post-transmission support for these reporters — like the witness protection programs in America for Mafia informers? Probably not. But meanwhile at least sports fans will be pleased that Thompson has exposed the practice, and not a bit surprised that Manchester United FC did not thank him for his sterling work on behalf of justice. When he suggested they pursue his leads inside the club — to find out where the tickets were coming from — they sent a solicitor's letter, and said "No comment". How not to win friends and not influence people, eh?

## BBC1

6.00am Business Breakfast (41879)

7.00 BBC Breakfast News (21320)

9.00 Breakfast News Extra (Ceefax) (468691)

9.20 Can't Cook, Won't Cook (s) (2974287)

9.45 Kilroy (s) (861542)

10.30 Good Morning with Anne and Nick (s) (88146)

12.00 News (Ceefax) and weather (2752707)

12.05pm Movie Magic (s) (515343)

12.30 Going for a Song with Michael Parkinson, Mariella Frostrup, Tony Slattery and Helen Lederer (s) (26788)

1.00 One O'Clock News (Ceefax) and weather (31707)

1.30 Regional News and weather (59017959)

1.40 Neighbours (Ceefax) (s) (94396165)

2.00 Pebble Mill with Alan Titchmarsh, Ross King and Sarah Greene (s) (8074813)

2.40 Moon Over Miami (Ceefax) (s) (178542)

3.30 The Morphs Film (s) (5456900)

3.40 Look Sharp! (s) (5443436)

3.55 Chucklevision (s) (6674542)

4.15 The All New Popcorn Show (s) (444181)

4.35 The Mink (Ceefax) (s) (2468436)

5.00 Newsround (Ceefax) (3217758)

5.10 Blue Peter (Ceefax) (s) (1827436)

5.35 Neighbours (s) (Ceefax) (s) (751875)

6.00 Six O'Clock News (Ceefax) and weather (287)

6.30 Regional News Magazine (839)

7.00 Wipeout. Three contestants compete for the star prize of a holiday (Ceefax) (s) (9726) WALES: 7.00 Don't Look Back

7.30 Tomorrow's World includes the story of a ten-year-old who took one day to crack the ancient Mayan hieroglyphic code that experts had struggled with for years. Now 30 years old, he takes of his 20-year mission to translate further texts. (Ceefax) (s) (523)

8.00 Hi-De-Hi. The local council plans to build a hospital next to the camp, however, Joe Maclin is not keen on the idea. With Paul Shane, Ruth Madoc, Jeffrey Holland and Su Pollard (s) (Ceefax) (s) (5146)

8.30 A Question of Sport. Bill Beaumont asks the questions and Ian Botham, Dodi Durrant and Lisa Lomas, and Will Carling, Graham Gooch and John Collins, try to find the answers. (Ceefax) (s) (7081)

9.00 Nine O'Clock News (Ceefax), regional news and weather (7720)

9.30 999. Michael Burk presents more tales of heroic rescues (s) (Ceefax) (261962)

10.25 Film: Trading Places (1983) with Dan Aykroyd and Eddie Murphy. A comedy about two millionaires who conduct a social experiment and bet on the result. Directed by John Landis (796339)

10.55 Film: Trading Places (2257455)

12.55am-2.15 Film: The Winchester Conspiracy (1974)

12.55am Film: The Winchester Conspiracy (1974). How and why members of the Australian Federal and New South Wales police forces worked with the Mafia in a secret operation to grow and distribute marijuana. With Gerald Kennedy and Terry Gell. Directed by Ken Cameron (s) (380531)

1.45 Weather (6619514)

VideoPlus+ and the Video PlusCode

The numbers next to each TV programme listing are Video PlusCode numbers, which allow you to programme your video recorder to record a programme automatically with a VideoPlus+ remote. Tap in the Video PlusCode for the programme you want to record. VideoPlus+ (V), PlusCode (P) and Video PlusCode are trademarks of Gemstar Development Ltd.

1.45 Weather (6619514)

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## BBC2

6.00am Open University: Biological Barriers (8233368)

6.35 Venice and Antwerp — the Cities Compared (8212875)

6.50 Art in the 15th Century (842523)

7.15 See Hear Breakfast News (Ceefax) (132523)

7.30 Star Trek: Animated version (s) (42813)

8.00 R11 Newer Work Design Awards (s) (Ceefax) (5045368)

8.25 The Little Polar Bear (s) (1933417)

8.30 Teddy Trucks (s) (5440534)

8.40 The Record (s) (6633639)

9.05 Daytime on Two: Job Bank (1494287)

9.15 Teaching Today (825788)

9.45 Watch (9711233)

10.00 Playdays (15271)

10.30 Celia's Eyes (3958436)

10.45 Numbers Plus (3946691)

11.00 Look and Read (6724822)

11.20 Short Circuit (6437253)

11.40 Belief File (4025981)

12.00 English File (82287)

12.30pm Working Lunch (20555)

1.00 Soap (39349)

1.30 Showcase (1666183)

1.45 Words and Pictures (1161138)

2.00 The Little Polar Bear (4467343)

2.10 Open View Trucks (4467343)

2.35, 3.10, 3.45 and 4.20 (73364097)

4.45 Today's Day (s) (647097)

5.15 Feature. A re-cap on some of the stories featured on past shows (s) (837610)

5.45 Carver's Caribbean. The writer and restaurateur Robert Carver visits Granada (556417)

6.00 The Munsters (Ceefax) (753894)

6.25 The Champions (Ceefax) (129639)

7.15 Electric Circus (s) (321839)

7.30 Young Musicians 95. National String Final (s) (55894)

8.30 Gardeners' World. Geoff Hamilton begins to plant his vegetables (Ceefax) (s) (5523) N.J.: 8.30 Hearts and Minds (5523)

9.00 The Fast Show. Last in series (Ceefax) (s) (8962)

9.30 Doing Rude Things. A light-hearted look at British sex films (s) (278262)

10.20 Fantasy Football League. A half-time report on the series, which resumes at 11.15pm (s) (88555)

10.30 Newsnight (Ceefax) (825604)

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## CHOICE

Fruity Stories Channel 4, 8.00pm

Scotland, this friendly series informs us, grows more raspberries than anywhere else in the world. Within 40 miles of Dundee alone there are 140 growers. Although the cool, moist climate is ideal for the fruit, this is not, surprisingly, the explanation. All is revealed here. A programme about soft fruits also visits strawberry fields in Kent and follows a contest to grow the heaviest gooseberry. There is practical advice as well. The key to good fruit, it seems, is hard pruning. In this respect the programme is badly scheduled, because the cutting back should already have been done. Fruity Stories continues to hop from topic to topic without leaving itself time to cover any of them in depth, but the enthusiasm is authentic and if the content fails to grip, there is always David Lloyd's wonderfully rich Lancashire accent.

The Fast Show BBC2, 9.00pm

Paul Whitehouse, Charlie Higson and friends sign off after another series which has simply justified the claims of the title. Fast is the word, with the sketches following each other in such quick succession that there is hardly time for the punchline. Sometimes, indeed, you are left waiting for the joke. To their credit, the writers rely little on the standard comic props of parody and topical satire. Most of the material is freshly minted and gains its effect on the reappearance, each week, of the same group of stock characters. The thieving Cockney, the mad professor, the elderly drunk and the redneck, recognisable types pushed to deliberately silly extremes. The exception is the teenage mum from Lancashire played by Caroline Hoek of *Mrs Merton*, an authentic portrayal which keeps caricature at bay.

The Ruth Rendell Mysteries: A Case of Coincidence ITV, 9.00pm

Eddie, the mentally retarded fisherman, admits murdering four women on the Cambridge River. The cops seem to have got their man. But Eddie is adamant that he did not bump off the flighty surgeon's wife who had booked in alone at a local hotel. String him up anyway, says Ronald Pickup's chief inspector, a reminder that this is 1954 and murderers still face the death penalty. Luckily for the cause of justice, Inspector Masters (Keith Barron) is doggedly pursuing his own hunches. Often, in Ruth Rendell stories, we know more than the police. The question is not who did it but whether he (it is usually a he) get away with it. This time we are left in the dark but be assured that what seems like a slow burner suddenly catches fire in the final 20 minutes.

Father Ted: The Old Grey Whistle Thief Channel 4, 9.30pm

There is not much in the way of plot and the jokes are a shade obvious but the saga of the three Irish priests continues to delight. It is partly the comedy of anticipation, of seeing the point before the characters do. When Dermot Morgan's Father Ted riddles on about having egg sandwiches, and Mrs Doyle, the landlady, arrives with the food for the priest's picnic, you just know what the sandwiches are going to contain. It is still funny. So is the bored and underemployed local policeman hoping for a crazed murderer on the loose. A stolen whistle and a dog-collared suspect provide the main action, but it is only an excuse for more quirky humour. Young Father Doug's dream of being on *Countdown* has nothing to do with anything. But in this show it does not need to.

Fenn Baddiel and Skinner (11.15pm)

11.15 Fantasy Football League presented by David Baddiel and Frank Skinner (s) (891707) WALES: 11.15 Wales 2006 — the Agenda (799675) 11.55 Fantasy Football League (882423) 12.15am Acting with Pamela Sales (8226295) 1.05 Weather (8264276) 1.10-2.00 The Life (565438)

11.50 This Life: Happy Families (s) (Ceefax) (s) (951788)

12.55am Bookmarked: Sidhean Farewell. Author Richard Allen (s) (Ceefax) (s) (2188956)

2.00-6.00 The Learning Zone

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FRIDAY MARCH 29 1996

Winter disruptions and new safety rules leave smallest Aintree field for 26 years

## National contenders frozen out



Osborne crashes to the ground, breaking his left collar-bone, as his mount, Black Humour, falls on the first day of the Aintree meeting yesterday. The horse was unhurt. Photograph: Ian Stewart

By RICHARD EVANS  
RACING CORRESPONDENT

THE smallest field since 1970 will line up for the Martell Grand National at Aintree tomorrow after a spate of last-minute defections. Lo Stregone, who had been a well-backed second favourite, was the surprise absentee as 28 runners were declared yesterday for the 4½-mile chase.

More than 80 horses had been entered, but after a winter that has interrupted training schedules and caused the cancellation of many meetings, the number of runners has reduced dramatically.

A change in the entry rules

aimed at enhancing safety, but which imposed a higher level of minimum ability, also prevented some horses from going for the world's most famous steeplechase. Killishin, who has improved dramatically this year and won the Eider Chase at Newcastle last month — a race won by Highland Wedding in 1999 before landing the National — was one horse who failed to meet the new entry criteria.

The maximum field of 40 has been amassed in eight of the last 11 years but with Lo Stregone being joined on the sidelines yesterday by Tarrant Tyrant, Dextra Dove and Toogood To Be True, the final

field is the same size as 26 years ago, when Gay Trip won. This year's field — if the ability of the top weight, supposedly the best horse in the race, is as an accurate guide — is also the poorest in terms of quality since Hallo Dandy won in 1984.

Rough Quest, 33-1 when the weights were published seven weeks ago, is 9-2 favourite after finishing second in the Cheltenham Gold Cup earlier this month. However, bookmakers are expecting Superior Finish to start as favourite. Corals bet: 9-2 Rough Quest, 7-1 Young Hustler, 8-1 Superior Finish, 9-1 Son Of War, 10-1 Life Of A Lord, Deep Bramble, Party Politics, 14-1 Lusty Light, Wyldie Hide, 20-1 others.

The defection of Lo Stregone was the start of a miserable

## THE RUNNERS

Young Hustler; Life Of A Lord; Deep Bramble; Son Of War; Lusty Light; Party Politics; Rough Quest; Cheltenham; Superior Finish; Captain Dibble; Rust Never Sleeps; Bishop's Hat; Wyldie Hide; Antonin; Riverside Boy; Beward Chew; Encore Un Pleu; St Peter; Lady Brackenfield; Over The Deck; Into The Red; Greenhill Raffles; Voompt De Vainmont; Plastic Spasage; Over The Stream; Three Brownies; Far Senior; Sure Metal.

day for Jamie Osborne, who had been due to ride the ten-year-old chaser. Yesterday, on the opening afternoon of the Aintree meeting the Lambourn jockey suffered a fall on Black Humour and broke his left collar-bone. To make matters worse, the injury cost Osborne a winning ride on Ask Tom in the next race,

although that victory provided some consolation for his trainer, Tom Tate, who also looks after Lo Stregone.

"It's been a wretched 24 hours with Lo Stregone but at least Ask Tom's win offers us some compensation," Tate said. "Lo Stregone has got equine flu. He has a temperature and is very quiet and not eating, which is quite unusual. It is very disappointing as I thought he was a real National horse, but that's racing."

While the small National field may disappoint the punter, it could come to the aid of the punter. The National Lottery has had a dramatic impact on betting on horse racing — off-course turnover on the Cheltenham Gold Cup was down by 20 per cent this

year — and the big bookmakers are desperately hoping the once-a-year punters who have a bet on the National will help to buck the trend.

"I think turnover will probably be about the same," Mike Dillon, of Ladbrokes, said. "It is still the No 1 race for the British public and we hope turnover will hold up at around £60 million because the once-a-year punter will have a bet."

After a Cheltenham Festival that proved unrewarding for backers, with only one winning favourite, the National meeting began in similar vein with winners at 10-1, 20-1 (twice) and 33-1 — and most favourites failing to reach the frame.

While winning the Grand National remains the dream

of most National Hunt jockeys, not every rider enjoys the unconditional support of their families in their quest for fame and glory. Jonathan Lower, who won the opening race on Tragic Hero, is due to ride Chatur in the big race tomorrow — much to annoyance of his mother.

"Everybody who is a jockey wants to ride in the National but my mum is not happy with it," Lower, 28, said. "She'll be at work on Saturday in a clothes shop in Weston-Super-Mare and will wait for the result and watch the race on video later. She never watches me live and would be happier if I was just watching the race as well."

Black day, page 43  
Form guide, page 43

Emburey's  
decision  
leaves way  
clear  
for Lloyd

By SIMON WILDE

FEARS that England would encounter difficulty attracting candidates for their new coaching position — which carries a guaranteed term of office of only six months — were realised yesterday when one of the leading contenders, John Emburey, withdrew from the running. His decision appeared to leave the field clear for David Lloyd, of Lancashire, whose appointment may now quickly follow.

In explaining his reasons, Emburey said he felt he needed more experience in cricket management and coaching before working with the national team, a task he described as his "fervent desire and ambition".

He has so far only managed an England A team on one tour, to Pakistan last winter, though he has just started a four-year coaching contract with Northamptonshire. Also prominent in Emburey's thinking, however, would be the knowledge that the England job carried no long-term security, unlike his post with Northamptonshire, which is believed to be worth £200,000.

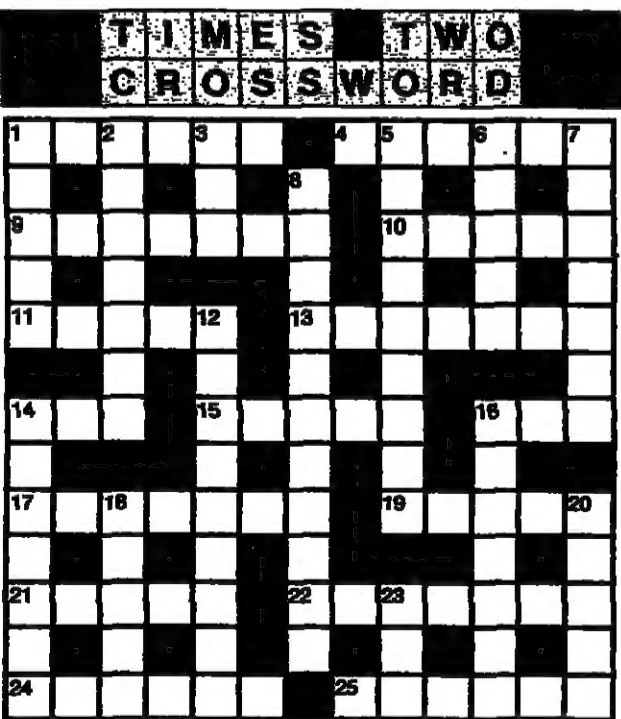
Had Emburey asked to leave, the county would not have stood in his way and had already agreed to a request from the Test and County Cricket Board (TCCB) on Tuesday to interview him.

"The matter of whether John wished to be regarded as a candidate lay with the individual himself," Steve Coverdale, the county secretary, said.

"The club will continue to support and give encouragement to him so that he gains the necessary experience which the club believes will help him to benefit the national cause in the future."

The TCCB has deliberately left itself the freedom to alter England's management at the end of the summer so that it can take account of the recommendations of David Adfield's working party into how the team is run.

Adfield yesterday announced the other members of his party. He has recruited Mike Gatting and Micky Stewart, who were England's first captain-manager pair and the party is made up of David Gower, another former England captain, Bob Bennett, the Lancashire chairman, and Tim Lamb, who will act as secretary.



No 742

- ACROSS**
- Group of selected pupils (6)
  - Pasture (6)
  - Platform (7)
  - Small wood; music dictionary founder (5)
  - Raised; sounds like cry of pain (5)
  - Be bought in greater quantities (than) (7)
  - Room of one's own; walk softly (3)
  - Proportion (5)
  - Dishonourable chap (3)
  - Woodcutting factory (7)
  - Escape from (5)
  - Text; angry speech (5)
  - Pig's foot (7)
  - Unoriginal, reworked material (6)
  - Front of fireplace (6)
- DOWN**
- Small shoot; fabric ornament (5)
  - Make reply (7)
  - Ventilate (3)
  - Type of Scottish reel (9)
  - Talk boringly; type of bee (5)
  - (Formation) made circular motion (7)
  - Everlasting life (11)
  - Self-regarding Greek youth (9)
  - After 1945 (4-3)
  - Working surface; contradict (7)
  - Value (5)
  - Safety elec. connection (5)
  - Lyric poem (3)

The solution to 741 will be published Wednesday, April 3

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Fry acts to  
lift bare  
market

By RUSSELL KEMPSON

FOOTBALL transfer deadline day in England, an often frantic series of wheeling and dealing, passed off with barely a whimper yesterday. At least Barry Fry, the Birmingham City manager and self-appointed king of the dealers, tried to inject a bit of life into the proceedings by buying back Paul Peschisoldo, the Stoke City striker, for £400,000 only three minutes before the 5pm deadline.

Peschisoldo, 24, joined Stoke for £700,000 two years ago, but has been frequently courted by Fry in the intervening period. The Canada international is married to Karren Brady, the managing director of Birmingham. Peschisoldo is Fry's 55th signing for the club.

Of the 16 permanent moves yesterday, totalling £4.65 million, and 24 loan deals, that of Mikhail Kavelashvili, from Spartak Vladikavkaz, the Russian league champions, to Manchester City, provided the largest outlay. Alan Ball, the City manager, paid £1.4 million for the striker, who will join Georgiou Kinkladze, his fellow Georgia international, at Maine Road.

Close behind, on £1 million, Blackburn Rovers rubber-stamped their purchase of Gary Croft, the Grimsby Town and England Under-21 full back.

Howard Wilkinson, the Leeds United manager, had agreed a £1 million fee for Rod Wallace to return to Southampton only for Wallace to decide that he was better off at Elland Road. Wilkinson also turned down a bid of £3.5 million, made by Everton, for Gary Speed.

Orkney cut adrift  
by rugby rebuffMark Souster finds island club angry  
over a decision to deny it promotion

In its brief but eventful history, Orkney Rugby Football Club has known good and bad times, but adversity has been overcome with the resolve that is characteristic of an island people. Isolated it may have been, but the club, formed in 1966, soldiered on, feeling secure under the umbrella of the Scottish Rugby Union (SRU) based 300 miles to the south in Edinburgh. The governing body's mantra has been the spreading of rugby and the wellbeing of all its members — now it seems no longer.

Just as Orkney's hopes were about to be realised, with the likelihood of promotion from district to national league rugby for the first time, the SRU has declared that whatever the outcome of next month's play-offs to determine who will enter division seven — Orkney will not be promoted.

The reasons cited — the extreme difficulty and expense of travel to and from the island for opposing teams — were conveyed to a disbelieving club committee on Tuesday by two SRU officials who flew in to announce a decision which, they said, had been taken after consultation with clubs in divisions six and seven. Some had complained that Orkney was an island too far.

"At a stroke everything we have worked towards and achieved has been wiped out," Norman Rushbrook, the club president, said yesterday. "We felt hurt and insulted. The whole of Orkney does. It's

been very emotional for us. With nothing to aim for, the club will have no future and die."

Emotion has now been replaced by anger which is being channelled into a campaign to overturn the verdict. The issue has united many of the Orkney's 19,500 residents who feel slighted; a special resolution was passed by the Island Council yesterday to ask the convenor, Hugh Halcro-Johnston, to write a letter of protest to Iain Todd, the SRU president, and a petition has been raised. Legal challenges are being considered, while the club has the necessary backing of clubs to force a special meeting of the SRU, an avenue it intends to explore on Monday.

Rushbrook said: "We accept it is not easy getting to the Orkneys, but we are only talking about one game per club per season. We have already spent £10,000 this season in travel expenses, but to play competitive sport in the Orkneys you have to put up with situations like that."

As a member, for the past four seasons, and now champions of the North District league which is centred around Aberdeen, an away game is a major undertaking. It involves boats, coaches and in exceptional circumstances flights or the charter of a plane. Simply to reach the mainland involves a two-hour ferry journey; games further afield are three days round trips.

Benn back  
to take  
on CollinsBy SRIKUMAR SEN  
BOXING CORRESPONDENT

NIGEL BENN will be back in the ring in June against Steve Collins, of Ireland, the World Boxing Organisation super-middleweight champion, after the shortest retirement in history. The bout will most likely be held in London.

Only 26 days ago, immediately after losing his World Boxing Council super-middleweight title to Thulane Malunga, of South Africa, Benn announced that he was calling it a day.

Benn, the former champion now believes that he can carry on for another three years. Given a challenge, he could become his old self again, he said: Collins was just that. Indeed, Benn felt confident enough to take on Collins without a warm-up contest.

Benn said: "I was going to stay in retirement, but since he's [Frank Warren, the promoter] mentioned Collins, it looks like I've got to go for it. I'm not going out a loser."

Benn said that he had not done the things expected of him against Malunga. "It wasn't me in the ring," he said. "I trained too hard and left it all in the gym. I need someone who's going to put fear in me — and Collins is a good fighter. He did something I couldn't do — beat Chris Eubank twice. Collins is right up my street. He ain't got to look for me and I ain't got to look for him."

"I feel naked without my belt," Benn said. "People ask for my autograph and I have to put 'former champion'." On the same bill, Malunga will defend his title and the winners could then meet to unify the championship.

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